



# SHIPS OF KINGSTON

"Good-bye, Fare Ye Well"

Gc  
974.402  
K57j  
1993080

M. L.

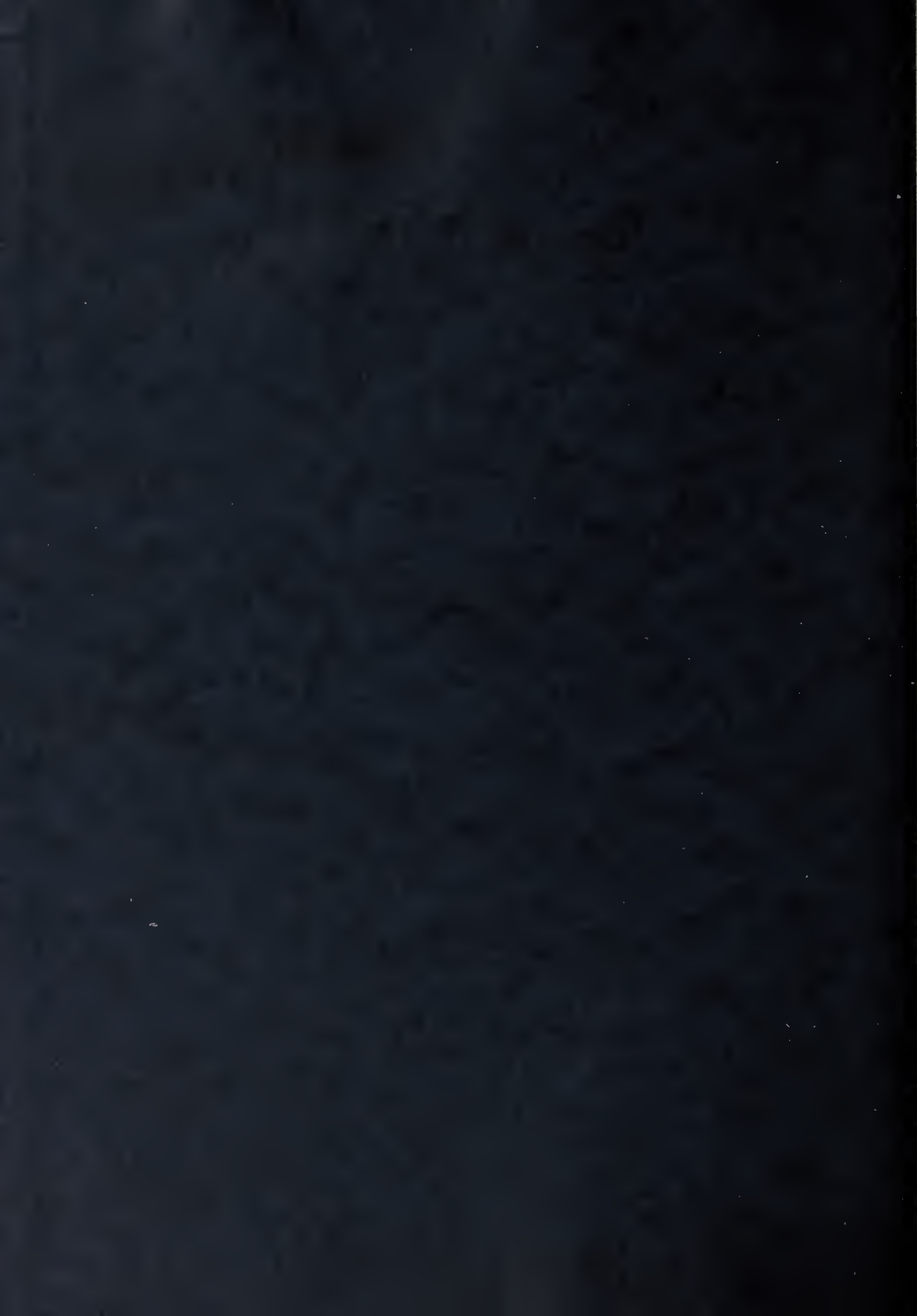
REYNOLDS HISTORICAL  
GENEALOGY COLLECTION ✓

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1833 00085 1649







REF.

MAR 17 '78

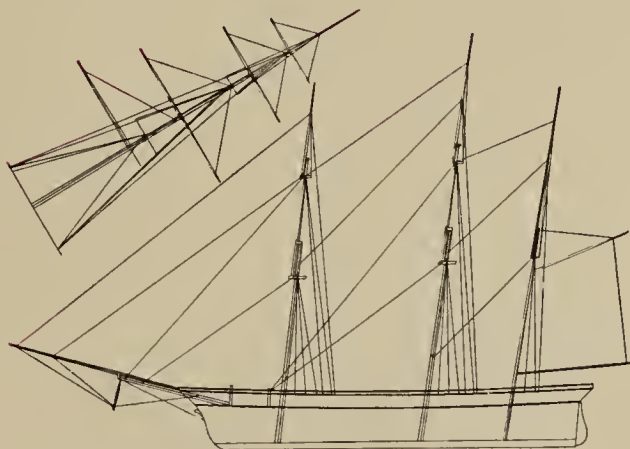


SHIP *Herculean* OF KINGSTON, BENJAMIN COOK, MASTER, ENTERING LIVERPOOL, 1840

# SHIPS OF KINGSTON

*“Good-bye, Fare Ye Well”*

BY  
HENRY M. JONES



ABBY

THE MEMORIAL PRESS OF PLYMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS  
MCMXXVI



446

Copyright  
1926 by  
EDITH L. HOLMES, *Trustee*

1993080

*“One Bell”*

I WISH to return my thanks to all who have assisted me in the preparation of this book. As a record, its value has been increased by those who have allowed photographs to be taken of their pictures of Kingston vessels, and also of the men who built or commanded them.

HENRY M. JONES.

*June, 1926.*

Mr. Jones died June 10, 1926, two weeks after he appointed a trustee to publish his work.

*Handwritten notes in the left margin:*  
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65  
66  
67  
68  
69  
70  
71  
72  
73  
74  
75  
76  
77  
78  
79  
80  
81  
82  
83  
84  
85  
86  
87  
88  
89  
90  
91  
92  
93  
94  
95  
96  
97  
98  
99  
100





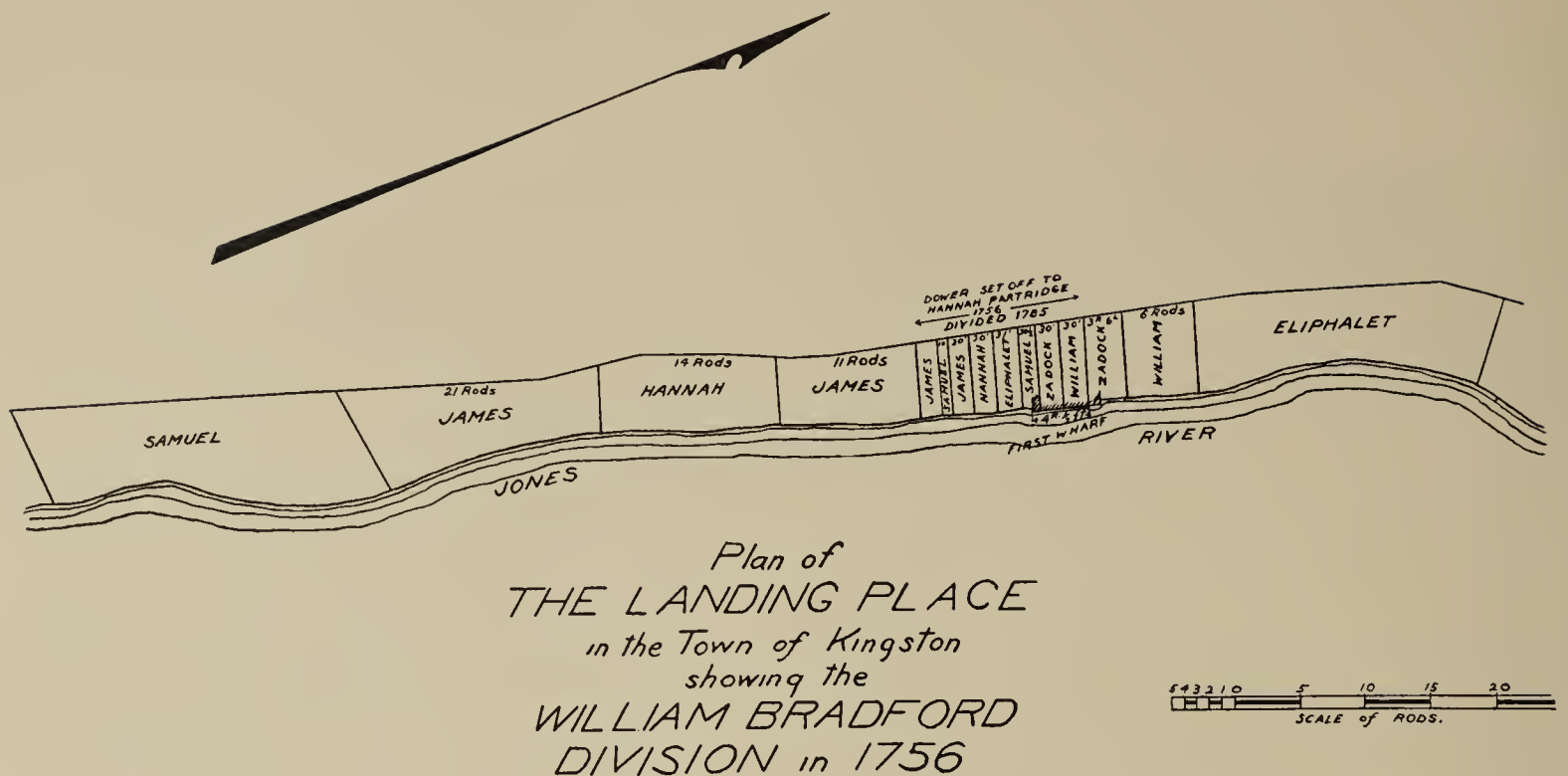


SO many years have elapsed since vessels were built or owned in Kingston on Jones River and in Rocky Nook, that on undertaking to write an account of these vessels it was soon found that very little information could be obtained about an industry that had its beginning before the incorporation of the town in 1726 and continued until 1887 when the last vessel, the schooner *Mary Baker*, owned by Edward Holmes, was sold, although during most of this time shipbuilding was the largest and most profitable business that the town has ever had. Nothing is now left to show where the vessels were once built and discharged their cargoes except a few old wharves, fast falling to pieces, and where once it was a common sight at high water for vessels to be seen coming and going to sea, the river is now deserted, the only navigation, a few small boats and launches. In place of the busy shipyards which once gave employment to many men are two boat-building yards, one owned by the heirs of Captain Edward A. Ransom on the site of the old Bartlett shipyard, and the other by George W. Shiverick just below the shipyard last used by Edward Holmes.

In connection with the list of vessels built and owned in Kingston I have received most valuable assistance from my wife, Abby B. Jones, daughter of Edward Holmes, concerning the voyages made by vessels owned by the Holmes family, and also from Mr. Alexander Holmes, especially in regard to the ownership of the strip of land on the westerly bank of Jones River, called the Landing, and from Mr. Thomas W. Bailey as to plans of this property at different periods.

Two hundred and seventy-six vessels with a total tonnage of about 34,000 tons have been built and launched into Jones River at the Landing since the Revolution. These vessels include sloops, pinks, schooners, brigs, barks and ships. The Drews, Bartletts, Severs, Eversons and Holmes appear on the records as builders of these vessels, although not all of them were owners of the land where they were built. A few records of vessels built before the Revolution are in existence and perhaps the number given above might be substantially increased from this source, but as these earlier vessels must have been comparatively small, the total tonnage would not be increased in proportion. The following brief description of the descent of the land upon which these vessels were built may be of some interest to those who wish to trace a bygone industry of Kingston.

The term "Landing" has been applied from the time of the earliest records to that strip of land bordering the Jones River from a point near its junction with Stony Brook up stream, to a point some few rods above the present Poor House. This strip was distinguished from the Landing place on Stony Brook used by the Governor William Bradford family by the use of its full name, The Jones River Landing Place, and was the only place on the river within the town limits where the upland came sufficiently near the natural bed of the stream to allow of the full use of the tide waters without the construction of causeways. The Landing originally was a portion of Major John Bradford's farm, and was bequeathed by him to his son William in 1713 in the following words, "A certain piece of my homestead where I now dwell in Plymouth aforesaid being by estimation about five acres. Bounded at the Southerly end by the land of Elisha Stetson, on the Northerly end by my salt meadow, Easterly bounded by Jones River and to extend six poles from the River, the whole length of said strip or piece of land, always allowing and reserving to my other two sons John Bradford and Samuel Bradford and their respective heirs forever, free liberty of Egress and Regress to and from said Jones River over said strip of land with the privilege of landing or laying any lumber or goods on the same convenient room for the same." Major Bradford had previously given a right to pass and repass to the Landing Place to Francis Cooke who lived near the Great Bridge, and perhaps to others. The cartway to the Landing came down to the river's edge at a point near the present railroad bridge and at this point the



first wharf was probably built. The fact that so many persons acquired right-of-way and privileges of landing goods here seems to be the only basis to the claims sometimes heard at the present time that there is a public landing place still in existence at this point. An interesting item in the deed of Francis Cooke, before mentioned, is the stipulation of the payment of a fee for the opening of the drawbridge, referring to the bridge over the Jones River near the old fish wharf.

William Bradford, who died in 1737, left a widow and six children. The Landing property seems to have been used in common by these heirs or their assigns until 1756, when a division of the whole strip was made, the widow getting a portion of the wharf. Zadock, William and Eliphalet the northerly portions, and James, Hannah and Samuel the southerly or upstream portions. As a matter of fact, the heirs had disposed of their title in the Landing some ten years before the division so that Samuel Foster appears as owner of the lower end in 1745, John Brewster all of the upper portions in 1742, and Seth Chipman of the middle portion, where the original wharf was located. The dower of the widow was divided in 1785. The Chipman share of the Landing has come down with fewer changes of ownership than any other portion, having been sold to Cornelius Sampson and held in the Sampson family until bought by the Old Colony Railroad Company, which company sold to Mr. Joseph Holmes such portions as were not necessary for the building of its tracks. There is no record to show that this portion of the Landing was ever used as a building yard.

The lower or down-stream end of the Landing was probably used at first for a wharf by Samuel Foster and by his son Robert, who is mentioned in 1765 as having lately built a new wharf thereon.

Samuel Foster sold in this year the lowermost wharf to Benjamin Walker, Shipwright, and it then descended by various deeds through Elisha Brewster and Stephen Drew, to Joseph Holmes in 1810. It probably was used as a building yard by all of these owners. The other half of the wharf was not included in Samuel Foster's first deed and came down through his son Robert's heirs to Joseph Holmes in 1827, and was known by the name of Foster's Wharf, and was probably the central wharf below the railroad bridge. It was on these two wharves that all of Joseph Holmes' shipbuilding operations were carried on, and was all the land Mr. Holmes owned on the river front previous to the building of the railroad, with the exception of a small parcel just south of the present railroad bridge, which he purchased of the heirs of Caleb Bates in 1823.

William Sever appears to be the first purchaser of a share of the upper portion of the Landing which John Brewster purchased in 1742 and which included all of the land once



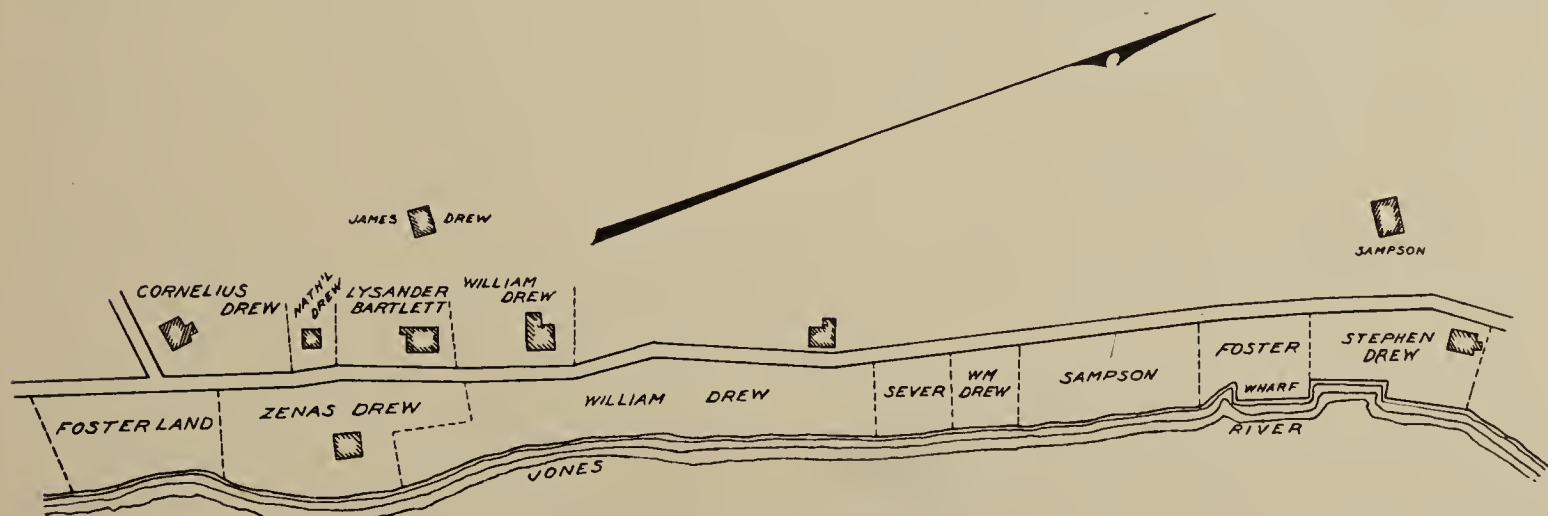
owned by Captain N. B. Watson and now by Dr. Arthur B. Holmes, heirs of Captain E. A. Ransom, Major George F. Sever, Mr. Verdelli and the Town of Kingston. The Severs' share, which included the land now owned by Dr. Arthur B. Holmes, was held in the Sever family until 1846, and there is some evidence to show that vessels were built here. It is said that the *Water Snake*, built in 1813, now lies buried in the sand just to the south of Dr. Holmes' boat-house. In 1773 William Drew, the grandson of Samuel Drew, who came to Kingston in 1713, and whose family had been building vessels at the Landing ever since that time, purchased all of the Landing between the Severs' share and the present Poor House lot. It was on this portion of the Landing that the Drew's shipyard and afterward the Lysander Bartlett (father and son) building yards were situated. The Bartletts' vessels were built at a point near the present boatshop of the heirs of Captain Edward A. Ransom, but the Drews' first yard was further up the stream near the Poor House. This upper yard, probably the oldest on the Landing, had been temporarily abandoned in 1772 as appears from a deed of that date describing the present bounds of the Poor House lot, which mentions a stone in a valley where was formerly a building yard. This upper yard was again used, from 1839 to 1854, by Alexander Holmes who built and launched here ten vessels.

Alexander Holmes, the eldest of the sons of Joseph Holmes, leased of John Drew the old building yard of the Drews and engaged Nathaniel D. Drew to superintend, as master carpenter, the building of his vessels. Very little is known about their voyages as they were sold soon after launching and on becoming president of the Old Colony Railroad Mr. Holmes gave up the business of building and owning vessels altogether.

The Reverend Zephaniah Willis, sometimes called Parson Willis, the minister of the town and the First Congregational Parish from 1780 to 1828, wrote, February 14, 1815, what he called "A Sketch of Kingston," with a description of the Landing, of which the following is a copy:

The Landing Place is on the bank of Jones River a little more than a mile from the mouth of the river. At low water there is only the natural stream at the wharf where the tide rises from eight to twelve feet. The Landing is the only place where shipbuilding is carried on. The water is not sufficient for carrying out vessels exceeding 400 tons and few of that size have been built there. Ship timber is nearly exhausted in Kingston and is brought from Middleboro, Halifax and the back towns. At Rocky Nook in the S. W.

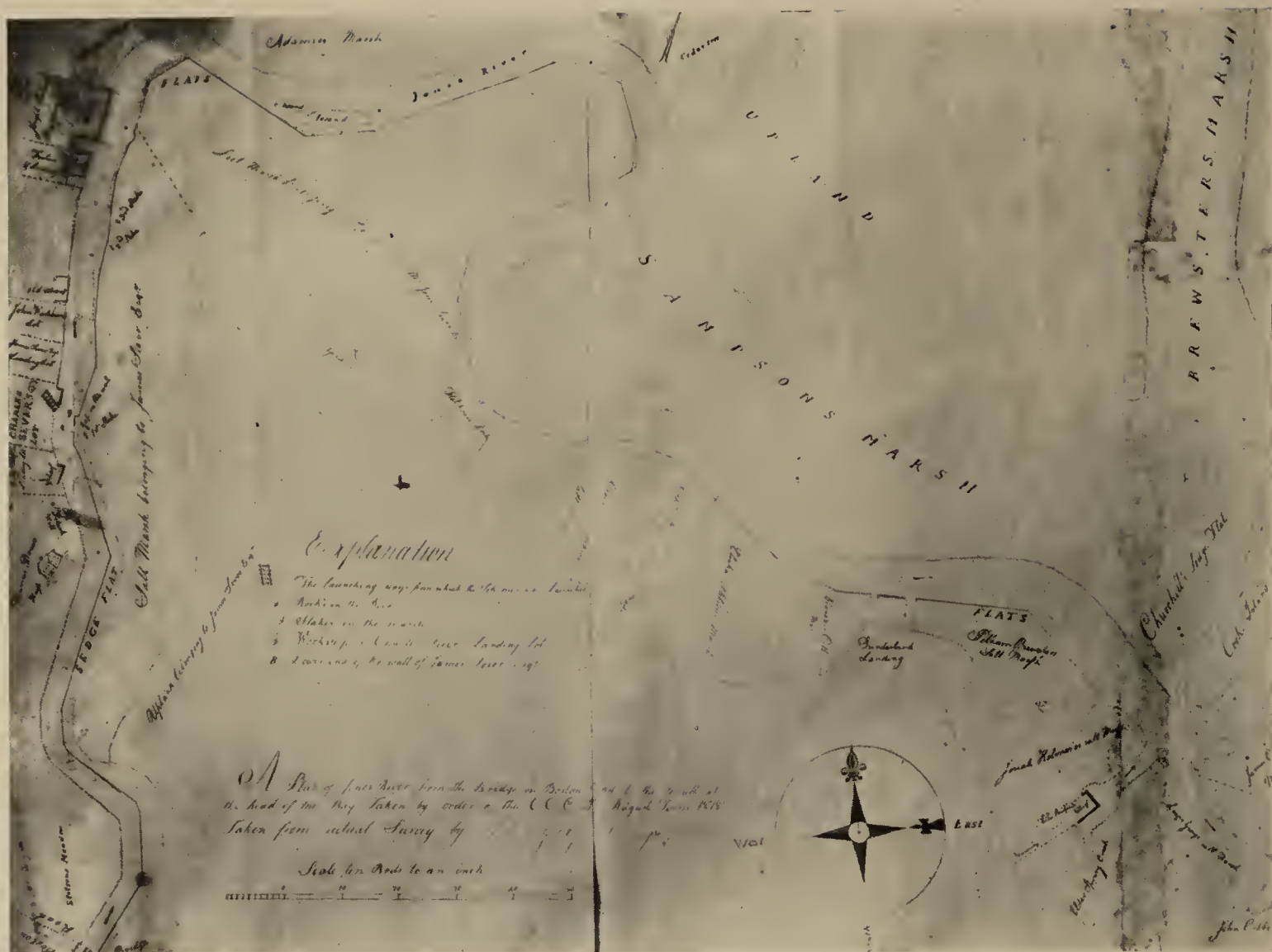
corner of the town is a wharf and the most convenient place for the business of navigation, it being of more easy access than the river, and has lately been more used. The fishing till the war was in latter years wholly carried on from this place. Formerly fish were cured at Sunderland, so called, on Jones River one mile from the sea. Before the Revolutionary War the fishing was more extensive than since. About 20 schooners were owned in the town. At the declaration of peace at the close of the second war with Britain the navigation



Plan of  
THE LANDING PLACE  
in the Town of Kingston  
showing  
PROBABLE OWNERSHIP  
in 1800

0 5 10 15 20  
SCALE OF RODS





PLAN OF THE LANDING AT KINGSTON, MASS., IN 1818

owned in Kingston was as follows: At the Landing 3 sloops 150 tons and 1 brig 160 tons. At Rocky Nook 6 schooners 445 tons and 2 brigs 256 tons. Between the Revolutionary War and the war now terminated

there have been built in this town upon an average 250 tons of shipping annually. About 60 men have been annually employed in seafaring business and 30 in shipbuilding.

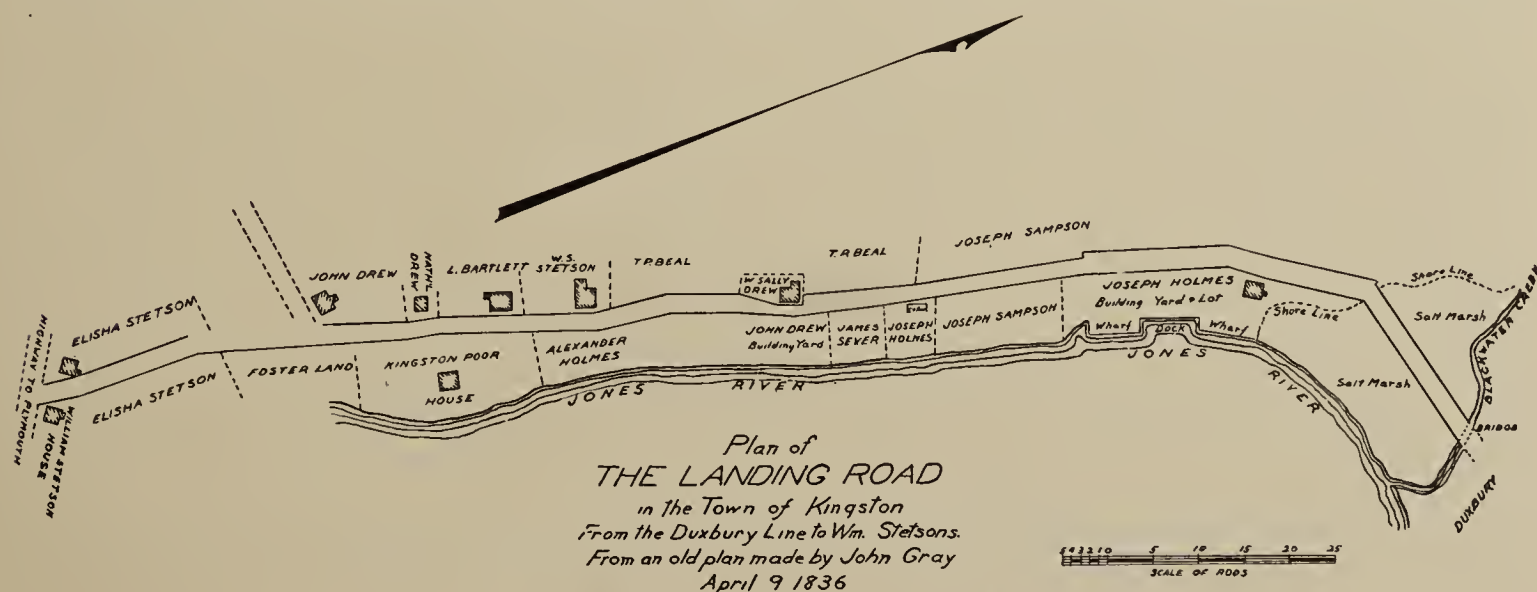
The Poor House lot was purchased by Zenas Drew in 1772 from Samuel Foster and included a portion of the original Landing. Still further up stream was another share originally set off to the heirs of Samuel Bradford in the division of 1756, described as extending to the land of Elisha Stetson. The southerly bound of this share was probably the corner of the wall still in existence at the river bank. It does not appear that these two upper shares were ever used as building yards.

The first record of vessels built in Kingston that can be found is in Thomas B. Drew's historical sketch of Kingston, given in 1876 on the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of the town, and in a history of Kingston written by him for the Plymouth County Atlas, published in 1884. In these accounts he says that Caleb Stetson had a building yard previous to 1714 at the Stony Brook Landing Place, which was on the north side of Stony Brook just above the mouth of Tussock Brook. The Landing Place, near the house built by Governor William Bradford, was probably the first one used by the early settlers here, continuing to be used until 1776.

In 1713 Samuel Drew with his eldest son, Cornelius, who was born in 1702, came to Kingston from Duxbury. He was a shipwright and he and his descendants continued in the business as builders and shipwrights as long as vessels were built and owned in Kingston. He lived at what was then called the Kingston Landing in the lower front part of the house formerly occupied by Wiswell S. Stetson and now owned by Mr. Candini. Cornelius A. Bartlett in his history of the Drew family says: "Here all their family was born. The ship-

yard where he and his sons built was in the valley near the line of the Alms-House lot launching many vessels across the river." Cornelius Drew had six sons, William, James, Zenas, Cornelius, Seth and Abijah, all shipwrights who carried on the business in Kingston as owners and builders of vessels, probably in the yard where Cornelius and his father first built. Mr. Bartlett says these sons built the brig *Independence*, 16 guns, in 1776, and the ship *Mars*, 20 guns, in 1778, both for the Provincial Government of Massachusetts. Mr. John Drew, called Uncle John, a son of Abijah, said they were built near where the Alms House now stands, having been told so by men who worked on them when they were building. It was not until 1773 that any of the Drews appear to have owned any land where their shipyards were, when William Drew, son of Cornelius, bought the land they were then using, having previously leased the land of the different owners, as was done by the Bartletts and Alexander Holmes. James Drew, the second son of Cornelius, lived in the house now owned by Miss Alice E. Thorp. He was called Master Jimmie and was considered the best shipbuilder of all his family.

From 1784 to 1789 Major Seth Drew was building on his own account, and in 1785 Stephen Drew appears as owning the northerly part of the Joseph Holmes shipyard, which was sold to him in 1806. After 1826, when Stephen Drew built a brig for Benjamin Delano, none of the Drews are on record as builders of any vessels, although they were probably employed in the other yards until 1839, when Nathaniel D. Drew, a grandson of Abijah, was the designer and master carpenter for Alexander Holmes, who that year commenced building vessels in the old Drew shipyard north of the Alms House and then owned by his Uncle John Drew. He continued with Mr. Holmes until he ceased building in 1854. In 1855 Nathaniel D. Drew went to Buffalo, N. Y., and built several vessels, but after a few years returned and entered the employ of Joseph Holmes, remaining with him and his son Edward until the last vessel was built in the Holmes' yard. Spencer Drew, a relative of Nathaniel, appears as the master carpenter in the Plymouth Custom House Records in the building of this vessel, the brig *Helen A. Holmes*, and we find that the Drews have been continuously connected with the shipbuilding industry of Kingston since the arrival of Samuel Drew in 1713, a period of 161 years. On the Records in the Plymouth Custom House, Lysander Bartlett's name is given as a builder and part owner of the sloop *Harmony* in 1804. He, together with his son, Lysander junior, occupied a shipyard on land then owned by the Drews and now owned by the heirs of Captain E. A. Ransom and Major George F. Sever. Here they built many vessels, some of them ships of large size for the time. They built for the Severs, Delanos, Winsors, Joseph Holmes, all of Kingston, and others, and the last work done in their yard of which there is any record was in 1854 when the schooner *Cordova*, Benjamin Delano and son owners, was retopped. Close to the north end of Major Sever's boathouse was an old well, now filled up. Northeast and near the Alms House, not far from the river where the old Drew shipyard was, is another well always called the potash well on account of the softness of its water. These two wells mark the location of these two





yards. There are also the remains of the two old wharves, one where the Drews built on land now owned by Mr. Verdelli, and the other where the Bartletts built on land now owned by the heirs of Captain E. A. Ransom. Below, and just above the railroad bridge on the same side of the river as the wharves just described, the timbers of a wharf where the first one on Jones River Landing was located could be seen until a few years ago when the land was filled in. Lysander Bartlett, senior, or the "Deacon," as he was called, having become an old man, his son Lysander, junior, succeeded him in the business and gave up this yard about 1855 and went to the yard of Joseph and Edward Holmes, remaining there as designer and master carpenter until Edward Holmes ceased building in 1874. In 1876 he built the 31-foot sloop *Playmate* for Mr. James L. Hall in the building built by Nathaniel D. and John Drew in the old Drew shipyard, and this was the last building done in this yard.

In 1806 Joseph Holmes occupied the lower half of the yard and wharf, and later the upper half of the Landing, as it is called today, for a shipyard and landing place for merchandise, the previous owners, as before described, having used it for the same purpose. He first commenced shipbuilding in Bridgewater on the Taunton River and his account of his building and ownership of vessels, written July 1, 1859, is as follows:



THE BUILDING YARD AND WHARVES AT THE LANDING, KINGSTON, MASS.,  
OF JOSEPH AND EDWARD HOLMES, ABOUT 1890

My connection in building vessels in Bridgewater commenced in the year eighteen hundred and one. May 27th went to Bridgewater engaged plank of Zeph. Shaw and timber 10 tons at 4 dols. per ton

of John. Leonard. At this time I commenced collecting material for building and laid the keel for a vessel in a yard which I hired near the line between Bridgewater and Raynham which I called the Bridgewater Ship Yard and is where I built all the vessels which I built in Bridgewater, five in number: Brig *Two Pollies*, Brig *Algol*, Brig *Lucy* noted for taking first cargo of ice, Schooner *Alexander*, Brig *Trident* which vessel took spare material to Kingston on Jones River my native place where I commenced building in the year 1806 at Jones River Landing so called. I have kept a vessel on the stocks nearly the whole time, sometimes two and once built three in a year and bought one besides. All but two I have fitted for sea and sent to sea on my own account and risk. I am now about placing another keel on the blocks of about two hundred tons, being 87 years and 7 months old.

Signed, JOSEPH HOLMES,  
Kingston, Mass.

It has been told by the old ship carpenters who worked in Mr. Holmes' yard that when first built, the vessels were launched down stream off the northeast corner of the lower wharf. Later when he came into possession of the upper portion of the wharf he launched up stream, out what is now the remains of the upper or southwesterly timber dock. The land where the last vessels were built at the Landing is now greatly changed. The highway or Landing Road goes under the railroad tracks and directly across the place where the vessel keels were laid. Previously this road was just to the west on the high bank. The vessels when launched ran into the bank on the southerly side of the river and after the railroad went across, the sterns of the larger ones overhung the track and there was just room to swing them bow down stream clear of the southwesterly corner of the present middle wharf. The day when a vessel was launched was always an eventful one for the town and people often came from a distance to see it. The rising ground in the rear of the yard was covered with people and about all the boys were on board the vessel when she took the water. The vessels sometimes went into the river bank with great force for



quite a distance and the boys were made to run from side to side on the deck causing the vessel to roll and this with the lines from the wharf to the windlass soon had her clear. There was never any formal christening ceremony at these launchings, but when it was all over Mr. Holmes served crackers, cheese and coffee in the old store to those who had assisted. The smaller vessels were completely rigged here, but the larger ones, after their lower masts were in, were towed down the river by men and oxen on the banks and when the bay was reached they were kedged and sailed to Rocky Nook Wharf and there made ready for sea. The large ones which Mr. Joseph Holmes commenced building after 1830 never came back to the Landing although hailing from Kingston, and the only time any of his ships returned was when the *Rialto* came to Rocky Nook Wharf for repairs. The smaller brigs and schooners were constantly coming and going from here, for, in addition to his extensive business of building and sending his larger vessels on foreign voyages he sent a number of brigs and schooners up the Straits and to the Grand Bank, fishing. He was also interested in a line of packets between Kingston and Boston, which was a business that had been carried on from the earliest times by those connected with shipping. Before the railroad was built all of the heavy merchandise was brought here by water and the packet business was continued for a number of years after the railroad was in operation.

The vessels used were small sloops and schooners and the cargo from here was usually wood, fish, and often passengers. These packets ran all the year excepting when the bay was frozen over in the winter. His fish wharves where he landed and cured his fish were just below where Stony Brook comes into Jones River on the north side. Alexander Holmes, his son, built the upper fish wharf and used it from 1840 to 1854 in his fishing business. At this time he also owned one-half of the Rocky Nook Wharf, using it for the same purpose. After Alexander gave up the fishing business Joseph Holmes occupied the upper as well



THE FISH WHARVES AND HOUSES OF JOSEPH AND EDWARD HOLMES ON  
JONES RIVER, KINGSTON, MASS., 1874

as the lower fish wharf. The business of owning and building vessels by Joseph Holmes, first by himself, and later in company with his sons, was on a much larger scale than had ever been carried on here before and although he sometimes built vessels for other parties he usually retained a controlling interest in them. The total number of vessels built and owned by him of which there is any record is 82. He also had a store in the lower part of the old house called the Landing House that still stands on the Landing from which he furnished supplies to his workmen and to his vessels when fitting them out for bank fishing and coasting voyages. The large ships and barks that he built after 1830 were used chiefly in the cotton trade between southern ports, England and the Continent, the return cargoes being usually salt and marble and sometimes liquors if from southern European ports, iron and coal from England, and they also brought many immigrants. The masters and officers of his vessels were usually men belonging to Kingston and adjoining towns, but a number of them came from the Cape. The entire crews of the fishing schooners were often obtained from this town, and many went on these voyages the greater part of their lives, one Kingston man, Andrew Stranger by name, going to the Grand Bank forty summers. It was very seldom that any vessel came to Kingston with a foreign cargo and then it was salt. After the vessels were rigged and sails bent they were taken to Boston to load a cargo, sometimes under their own sails if wind was fair, and if ahead, towed by



a tow boat. The Holmes usually invited their friends and neighbors to go as passengers, and the crews were made up of men working in the building yards and sailors whose homes were in Kingston and happened to be on shore at the time and who shipped for the run. Often a charter was secured for a cargo from New York City or some southern port to Europe and the new vessel went to sea in ballast directly from Kingston with a full complement of officers and crew bound for the port, to load what was called for in the charter. The schooners and brigs were employed in fishing, coasting and West India voyages, with occasional voyages to the continent of Europe and to South America. The vessels that went fishing summers were sent south in the winter on what they called freighting voyages and they brought back to Kingston corn, flour, coal and lumber, arriving back in the spring in time to fit out for the Banks. Mr. Edward Holmes had a coalyard on the lower Landing Wharf, supplying many families in town with coal.

For many years after vessels were first built in Kingston the builders were able to obtain nearly all of the timber necessary for their purposes in the forests of Kingston and surrounding towns. On this account the Holmes became owners of large tracks of woodland purchased for the ship timber growing there, and many acres of this land remain in the family today. At one time Mr. Edward Holmes bought a large wood lot in Halifax for one tree that was growing there which he had found suitable for a vessel stem. As late as the time of the building of the last vessel by Mr. Edward Holmes in 1874, long logs for keels, drawn by three or four yoke of oxen, could be seen going slowly through the streets bound for the Landing, having been hauled from Plympton or Halifax and sometimes Middleboro, considerable skill being required to make the sharp turn off the Main street to enter the way to the Landing on account of the length of the logs. The masts and spars were often made in East Boston and when finished brought to Kingston by some of the schooners. If too long to go on deck they were slung over the vessel's sides. The captain of the schooner picking a favorable chance to make the fifty-mile run. During the latter part of the building by the Holmes much of the timber and plank used in the construction of the vessels was brought in their own schooners from North Carolina.

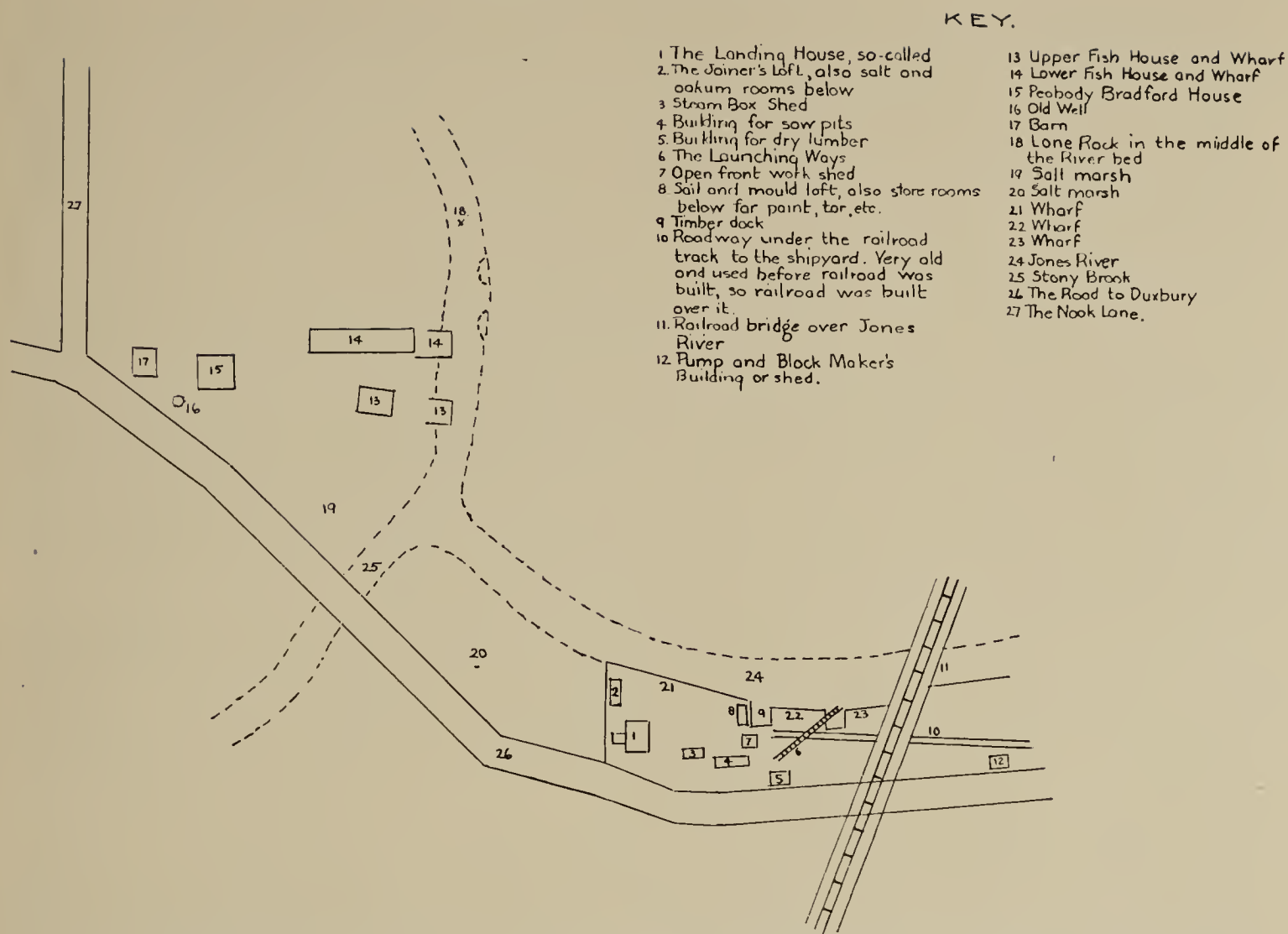
From 1830 to 1855 the business carried on by Joseph Holmes was at its height and in 1850 he had over \$200,000 invested in vessels afloat and was one of the largest individual owners of vessels in the United States at that time. Joseph Holmes had schooners named for every month in the year except for May, and that one was called the *May Bee*, as there was already a schooner named the *May* listed in the United States shipping register.

From about 1850 to his death in 1863, Joseph Holmes built a number of small barks for the Mediterranean fruit trade. These barks were chartered by Boston merchants and proved very profitable to their owners. They were the *Ann and Mary*, *Fruiter*, *Abby*, *Sicilian*, *Neapolitan*, *Fruiterer* and brig *Bird of the Wave*. After the death of Joseph Holmes, his son, Edward, who had been associated with him in business since 1827 continued it on his own account till 1887. He built and owned eight vessels. Mr. Edward Holmes was thus distinguished from all the other ship builders in Kingston for his father, Joseph, once said that he was the only man he ever knew who could go into the woods, select and cut the timber, design and build the vessel, rig and make the sales and sail her after she was finished. The last work done in the Holmes' shipyard at the Landing was in the winter of 1883 when the schooner *Mary Baker* was hauled into the north timber dock and retopped.

The Beals, David and David, Jr., were merchants in Kingston, and had vessels built here, as their names are on record in the Plymouth Custom House from 1788 to 1810 as owners with Nathaniel, John and Sylvanus Thomas, and also the Drews, who built for them. Their vessels were small and were used in connection with their business.

The first of the Severs to settle in Kingston was Nicholas who came in 1728, married the Widow Little, and soon after engaged in business as a merchant and owner of vessels, later being associated with his sons, William and John, the firm name then being Nicholas Sever and Sons, which was continued until his death in 1764, when the business was carried on by William, John having died in 1760.





PLAN OF THE OLD SHIP OR BUILDING YARD OF JOSEPH HOLMES AND HIS SON EDWARD HOLMES AT THE LANDING ON JONES RIVER AT KINGSTON, MASS.

*Plan Traced from one by Edward Holmes*

Not any land at the Landing was owned by the Severs until the latter part of the seventeenth century when William secured a piece south of the present railroad tracks.

They hired or leased wharves at the Landing and at Rocky Nook as shown from old account books, and were associated with William Drew and his brothers, who built vessels for them.

These vessels were sloops, schooners and brigs used for packets, coasting, mackerel and bank fishing and West India voyages, with a few European and whaling voyages.

Nicholas Sever had for his first vessel the sloop *Harvard*, built by Cornelius Drew in 1731, and named for Harvard College from which he had recently graduated.

It seems singular that this Nicholas Sever, who, with his sons, was the first person in Kingston to become an owner of vessels in any number, was first a minister and that one hundred years later Joseph Holmes, who, with his sons, was the largest shipowner and builder the town ever had, was also first a minister, both being college graduates, Joseph Holmes graduating from The College of Rhode Island, later called Brown's University, in 1797.

The firm of Nicholas Sever and Sons and later William Sever alone, are known to have owned seventeen vessels and their names and rig are as follows:

Sloop . . <i>Harvard</i>	Brig . . . <i>Kingston</i>	Schooner . . <i>Squirrel</i>
Sloop . . <i>Charming Betsy</i>	Schooner . . <i>Desire</i>	Schooner . . <i>Defiance</i>
Sloop . . <i>Mermaid</i>	Schooner . . <i>Spring</i>	Schooner . . <i>William</i>
Sloop . . <i>Juno</i>	Schooner . . <i>Good Fortune</i>	Schooner . . <i>Triton</i>
Sloop . . <i>Hawke</i>	Schooner . . <i>Lark</i>	Brigantine . <i>Sally</i>
Brig . . <i>Stork</i>	Schooner . . <i>Ranger</i>	

It is probable that they owned others of which no account can be found. There is no record of the dimensions or tonnage of these vessels, except that of the schooner *Triton*. She was 77 tons, 47 feet keel, 19½ feet beam and 8 feet deep, and built by Cornelius Drew in 1757.

These vessels were chiefly employed in the same business. The above tonnage and dimensions would apply to nearly all of them, with the exceptions of the brigs, which were larger.

Nicholas Sever and his son William were also interested in iron furnaces here, and their output was carried to Boston and Salem in their packets, and they were also large shippers of wood, plank, staves and salt fish.

Their whaling business was carried on from Rocky Nook Wharf, where William Sever owned a storehouse on land and wharf leased of the Delano's. This business does not seem to have been very important as they had only two vessels engaged in it, the sloop *Mermaid* and the brig *Stork*, and these for only a few years between 1760 and 1770.

It is in connection with William Sever's whaling voyages, that we find from his old account books that Robert Foster, of Kingston, who owned what is now the middle wharf at the Landing, was owner in 1767 of the schooners *Brittania* and *Polly*, both of these schooners being used for whaling, and he paid wharfage at Rocky Nook Wharf to William Sever for landing oil and blubber and docking his vessels there.

Foster was a blockmaker and rigger, having a shop at his wharf at the Landing.

In 1769 William Sever had the sloop *Hawke* built by William Drew and Co., and Robert Foster was allowed two quarts of rum by William Sever for setting the mast and later three quarts of rum for setting the masts in the schooner *Defiance*.

No other account can be found of Robert Foster owning vessels and his interest in them could not have continued many years.

The whaling voyages undertaken at this time in these small vessels were short, the blubber being tried out at home.

The old account books kept by William Sever are very interesting as showing the varied interest of a merchant of a seacoast town at a period shortly before the events took place that led to the war between England and her colonies in America, and the following taken from his day-book or journal gives an idea of the business that some of his vessels were engaged in between the years 1757 and 1771:

- |           |  |                |   |
|-----------|--|----------------|---|
| Dec. 1758 | Schooner <i>Desire</i> , William Sever owner, returned from a voyage to Jamaica of 4½ months.  | 1764           | William Sever paying ground rent for storehouse on Rocky Nook Wharf to Joshua Delano.   |
| Jan. 1759 | Schooner <i>Lark</i> , William Sever owner, fishing the previous year. Abraham Everson, Master.  | Nov. 1764      | William Sever interested in a whaling voyage the past summer.   |
| Jan. 1759 | Ebenezer Fuller on a voyage to Carolina for William Sever.   | Apr. 1766      | William Sever had the sloop <i>Mermaid</i> , Seth Chipman, master, on a voyage to Antigua the past winter.  |
| June 1760 | Zenas Drew building a schooner for William Sever.  | 1767           | William Sever had a vessel on a whaling voyage in the summer.   |
| Aug. 1760 | Samuel Drew building a brigantine for William Sever.   | 1767           | William Sever sent sloop <i>Mermaid</i> to Carolina and West Indies during the winter, Samuel Drew, master.   |
| June 1760 | Peleg Holmes and Josiah Fuller fishing for William Sever as masters.   | 1769           | William Sever had the schooner <i>Ranger</i> , Rufus Ripley, master, on a voyage from Carolina in the spring with corn.                                       |
| 1760      | William Sever had brig <i>Stork</i> on a voyage to and from Cadiz. Theophilus Cotten, master.  | 1769           | William Sever had the sloop <i>Charming Betsy</i> , Joseph Bartlett, Jr., master, on a voyage from North Carolina in the spring, freight 128 bushels of corn. |
| May 1761  | William Sever had schooner <i>Ranger</i> , Wait Grey, master, on a voyage to Philadelphia.   | Feb. 21st 1770 | Peabody Bradford sells to William Sever ¼ part of sloop <i>Juno</i> for 35 pounds.  |
| June 1762 | Brig <i>Kingston</i> , William Sever, owner; Joseph Bartlett, Jr., of Kingston, master; completed a two months' voyage to the West Indies. |                |   |



William Sever was Agent for the Provincial Government of Massachusetts or as he sometimes writes it, State of Massachusetts Bay, in the building at Kingston, Mass., in 1776 of the brig *Independence* as under date of November 22 that year the following entry is found in his journal:

Mass. State, for brig *Independence* Dr. to William Drew, his bill for building 488 pounds.

There are many other charges in his journal to the State on the brig's account and the last one is dated:

Kingston, Feb. 6, 1777, Mass. State, for brig *Independence*. To cash paid Daniel Adams for expenses in recruiting as per bill, 3 pounds, 7 shillings, 9 pence.

From these and other charges it is shown that William Sever was the State Agent till the brig was ready for sea with crew on board. At this time he was also an agent for the State in the sale of prizes captured from the English by State and private armed vessels. After the Revolutionary War he does not seem to have been actively engaged in business.

The first record in the Plymouth Custom House showing that the Severs owned any vessels here is in 1795, when John Sever, Merchant, owned the sloop *Nancy*, 57 tons, built in Duxbury. His store was on the corner of Main and Linden Streets where the building once used for a general store by George E. Cushman and now used for the manufacture of candies by the firm of Ye King's Towne Sweets, Inc., stands, and used by his father and grandfather. In 1799 he had the schooner *Sarah* built by William Drew and these vessels he employed in his business as packets to Boston and for coasting. The next one of his family that appears as an owner is his son John, who in 1817 owned, with his brother and others, the sloop *Leo*, 61 tons, built by Lysander Bartlett, senior. From this time till 1841 he had a number of schooners, brigs and ships built by Lysander Bartlett, senior, in the Bartlett yard and owned them alone or with his brothers, James N., Charles, and others. In 1832 he had built the ship *Baltimore*, 229 tons; followed by the ship *Mariposa*, 317 tons; ship *Russell*, 436 tons; ship *Charles*, 387 tons; ship *Alesto*, 420 tons; and ship *Leodes*, 445 tons; this last ship being the largest vessel built above the present railroad bridge.

The ship *Russell* was a favorite of all Colonel Sever's ships and earned for her owner a great deal of money.

These ships were used for foreign voyages, several, and perhaps all, in the cotton trade between the southern states and Europe and although they hailed from Kingston never came here after they first sailed. John Sever, or Colonel Sever, as he was called, was the first president of the Old Colony Railroad and it is probable that about the time the railroad came through the town in 1845 he disposed of most of his interest in shipping. He built and occupied the house now owned by Mr. Roland Bailey.

An old receipt book, kept by Major Seth Drew, shows him building the following vessels, of which there is no other record:

1784 Building a schooner for Jesse Harlow.

1785 Building a brig for Jackson, Davis and others.

1784 Building a schooner for Ripley, Fuller and others.

1785 Building a schooner for William Grey of Salem.

1785 Building a sloop for Wm. Drew and Jonathan Holmes.

1789 Building a brig, *Betsy*, for Captain. Benjamin Cobb of Boston.

A deed found by Miss Emily F. Drew in the Registry at Plymouth shows that once there was a building or shipyard on Jones River near the old fish wharves that are situated just below the mouth of Stony Brook.

The deed describes a drawbridge that crossed the river at this place, being reached by a causeway over the salt marsh opposite to these old wharves. The road to this bridge was then the road to Boston from Plymouth and when it was changed and the present Great Bridge built the drawbridge was removed.

Until about 1855 this land on the north bank of the river below where Stony Brook empties into it was in Duxbury, so no attempt has ever been made to locate the position of this yard.

A copy of the deed describing this yard of Thomas Loring of Duxbury is as follows:

Plymouth County Deeds, Vol. 6, folio 113, 21 June 1706.  
 Grantor, Thomas Loring of Duxbury Shipwright.  
 Grantee, Saml Bradford of Duxbury Yeoman.

Fifteen acres of upland and Salt marsh land in Duxboro (which is undoubtedly the "Peabody Bradford Place") also five acres of upland and marsh on the west side of the highway and on the southerly side of John Trasey and Tussock Creek "allways reserving unto my Self and my heirs lawfully begotten of my body forever, ye use of the building yard wch I now have att or near Jones River bridge, of Twelve rods Square bounded on ye South with

ye Sd river, and on the west with the highway, for me and my heirs — forever, to build Ships or Vessels in & upon, or to land or lay Any Manner of Timber plank or Any other lumber & goods necessary in order to building or riging & fitting of Vessels the Sd Bradford And his heirs forever having liberty to Continue ye fence by the high way on the Westerly Side of ye Sd yard where it now Standeth. . . ."

At the entrance to Short Reach is an old wharf, once called Sever's Wharf and used by that family, and later by Alexander Beal and Lewis Ripley as a lumber yard. Captain Francis Washburn, with Mr. Harvey Ransom, were the last to use it, between 1860 and 1870, keeping their fishing smacks there and using the old building that stood on the wharf for storage purposes. It is now called Skipper's Wharf for Captain Washburn.

At the lower end of Long Reach is Bradford's Wharf, now fallen to pieces. This was last used for landing and curing fish. An old building once stood on the south side of the hill, called Sunderland, which was used for a fish house, this hill being now owned by Dr. Arthur B. Holmes. Captain Ellis Bradford, who lived in Rocky Nook, owned it for some years, and the last one to own it for a fish wharf was Captain Frank Johnson, many years ago. This old wharf is near Elder Cushman's Spring and the site of his house and this place was probably used by him for a landing and later by those who lived in that vicinity.

The families of Winsors, Whittens and Delanos who lived in Rocky Nook owned many vessels and the first record found is in 1803 when Peter Winsor and Benjamin Delano owned the sloop *Two Sisters* of 44 tons. The Winsors, Peter, William D. and Elbridge G., owned vessels until after 1860, Peter Winsor having ownership in the largest number. Their vessels were sloops and schooners and were employed in fishing, coasting and West India voyages, using the Rocky Nook Wharf. They owned by themselves, or with others, 27. Melzar Whitten first owned vessels in 1814 and continued as an owner sometimes with Melzar Whitten, Jr., Sever and Delano, until shortly after 1840, also using Rocky Nook Wharf. These vessels numbered 16 and were employed in fishing, coasting and West India voyages.

Benjamin Delano and his son Joshua were, with the exception of Joseph Holmes, the largest owners of vessels in Kingston and carried on the business from 1803 to shortly after 1882 when the last vessel, the schooner *Cordova*, was sold. These vessels were used for fishing, coasting, West India and European voyages, and they owned in whole or in part, 37, having most of them built by Lysander Bartlett, senior and junior. They used the Rocky Nook Wharf and since they commenced business the family has retained an interest in it to the present time, now owning it with Dr. Arthur B. Holmes, who became an owner through his father, he inheriting it from his father, Alexander Holmes.

In 1866 Alfred F. Howe of Boston, who at that time was living in Kingston, had a yacht built at Clarke's Island by Mortimer and Edward Watson. This was a keel sloop, with a cabin 23 feet long, and named the *Black Diamond*. He used her for pleasure trips about the bay and cruising along the Massachusetts coast, selling her in Boston in 1868. This appears to have been the first small vessel that was owned here for pleasure that could be called a yacht, although there were always some small sailing craft on the river used for fishing, of which we have no record. At that time Captain Charles Stetson had a sloop about 18 feet long, using it for sailing and fishing around the bay. About 1867 Captain Otis Baker had the sloop yacht, *Grace Darling*, which he bought in Duxbury. This was a center board craft with cabin and large cockpit and was about 25 feet long. He used her for several years, keeping her at the lower end of Mr. Edward Holmes' wharf and then sold her to Plymouth. At this time Mr. Cyrus Ripley had a sloop about 17 feet long which



he used for pleasure, and these four were the first of the yachts owned in Kingston. In 1874, Mr. James L. Hall bought in Lynn the 23-foot center-board sloop *Plough Boy* and sold her to North Plymouth in 1876. That year he had the keel sloop *Playmate* built by Lysander Bartlett, in the building now used for a boatshop by the heirs of Captain E. A. Ransom, this building then standing by the river in the old Drew shipyard near the Alms House, and formerly used by N. D. Drew when building vessels for Alexander Holmes in 1850. The *Playmate* was 31 feet long, 10 feet wide, with a draft of 3 feet. Mr. Hall used her for cruising till 1879, when she was sold to Mr. Willoughby of Plymouth, who afterward sold her to Boston. In 1871 Captain Nathan B. Watson commenced building sailboats and dories in a shop he built on land of John Drew's, close to the Landing Road just south of the present boatshop used by the late Captain Ransom. In 1874, he built the 17 feet over all sprit-sail lobster boat, *Wanderer*, the first smooth-planked boat built for this bay and used for lobstering and fishing. She was the largest and fastest boat of the kind that had been built up to that time. These boats were partly decked and had a large sprit foresail and smaller sprit mainsail with a boom and were very fast and able. At that time their use was almost wholly confined to Plymouth, Kingston and Duxbury bays. Previous to Captain Watson's building the *Wanderer* these lobster boats had been what is called lap-streak or clinker-built and much smaller and were built on Clark's Island and in Duxbury. The *Wanderer* was a deep keel boat, very sharp forward, and when she was launched it was thought by some that she would not be safe in running in a strong breeze on account of her sharpness as her sharp bow would cause her to run under. On trying her it was soon seen that this was just the reverse and no more full bowed boats were built.

John Drew, or Uncle John, as he was called, who at this time owned all of the land above the railroad bridge formerly occupied by the Drews and Bartletts for building yards, having become an old man, unable to work at his trade of ship carpenter, and not knowing what it was to be idle, dug the sloping bank all away clear to the highway where Captain Watson's boatshop first stood, continuing his digging nearly the whole length of this lot, carrying the sand in a wheelbarrow to the bank of the river and filling in what had previously been in most places a narrow strip of marsh land. This removed all traces of the site of the building yard last used by the Bartletts. All of the land where Captain Watson's boatshop and the boathouse of P. W. Maglauthlin stands, these two buildings, now being owned by Dr. Holmes, was made by him, and it was after he filled in this store that Captain Watson moved his shop to its present location near the river in 1874.

This John Drew was the last of his generation of old ship carpenters living near the Landing and of a truly vanished type of men who worked from sun to sun, drank their morning and afternoon allowance of rum, and were seemingly indifferent to the variations of our New England climate. Some of the stories told of these old carpenters, the jokes they played on one another, and their quaint sayings, are often recalled to this day. Their skill as workmen is shown in the lasting qualities of the vessels they worked on. None of the modern labor-saving machinery was ever used in these building yards, and one or two small buildings were sufficient to take care of what little work had to be done under cover.

As the business of Joseph Holmes and his sons increased they were obliged to have a larger number of buildings in their yard and were more fully equipped than the other builders to fit their vessels for sea, but all of the shipbuilding was done out in the open and the ship carpenters worked out of doors summer and winter, regardless of the weather.

Having enlarged his shop Captain Watson built in the winter of 1874 the 25 feet over all center-board cabin-sloop *Idle Hour* for Lewis H. Keith of Kingston, which was the first yacht ever built here. She was a great improvement in design and finish on any pleasure craft that had yet been owned here or in the bay and attracted much attention. Mr. Keith used her for cruising and racing, selling her in 1877 to Dorchester. The next year Captain Watson enlarged his shop again and built the *Hermes* schooner yacht, which is described in list of



vessels built in Kingston. He continued building lobster boats and catboats to the number of 19 till 1892.

Captain Edward A. Ransom commenced building lobster boats in Captain Watson's shop about 1879, having previously worked on the yachts *Idle Hour* and *Hermes* when they were building. He continued building these boats there until 1885 when he bought the workshop, built by Nathaniel D. Drew in 1850 in the old Drew shipyard near the Alms House and moved it to its present site. Here, until his death in 1922, he built many lobster boats, small yachts and gasoline launches, also steamer *Tiger*, whose name is given in list of vessels built here. He designed and built the fastest lobster boats ever built for the bay and was the first one to build these boats with the modern hanging stern.

They were all center-board, about 20 feet over all, between 16 and 17 feet water line, 6 feet 10 inches beam, and 26 inches draft without the center-board. They usually had from 100 to 300 pounds of lead outside on the keel and were given a much larger sail plan than the old ones, although retaining the sprit-sail rig. These boats of Captain Ransom's design were used for lobster fishing and pleasure boats and have always been noted for their speed and weatherly qualities in heavy weather.

George W. Shiverick was born in East Dennis, on the Cape, and came to Kingston in October, 1895. He began building yachts and small boats in November of that year in a shop he built on land leased by Mr. Walter C. Hammond and bordering on Jones River.

This shop and yard are situated just below the lower wharf at the Landing and up to this time he has built here 228 craft of all descriptions.

In 1888, he started to learn the boatbuilders' trade of Charles Jenkins of Harwichport, and worked with him for a year, most of the time on schooners' yawl boats.

The winters of 1890, 1891 and 1892, he was with C. C. Hanley of Monument Beach, building Cape Cod catboats, and in May, 1892, he went into business for himself at East Dennis, launching his first boat, the cat *Attempt*, in August of that year.

Between this time and October, 1895, when he came to Kingston, he built 10 boats, and established his reputation as a designer and builder of fast and well-constructed yachts of all classes.

From his building yard at the Landing he has launched 21 Class I 18-foot W. L. knockabouts, 19 Duxbury 15-foot W. S. knockabouts, 18 Duxbury 14-foot W. L. catboats, 56 motor boats, 69 sailing yachts of all kinds, and 45 dories and tenders.

The largest yacht he has built here was the 41 feet over all C. B. sloop, *Early Dawn II*, for Boston parties.

The letters to Joseph Holmes, or Joseph Holmes, Jr., as he was called till the death of his father, are fairly well preserved, but there are many years' correspondence missing in which the final ending of his vessels might be shown, whether lost while owned here, or sold to other ports. The captains of the smaller vessels, schooners and brigs were men of little education and their letters contained a bare statement of the voyages, and were often so poorly written that they could hardly be read. But they all seem to have been honest and men of great ability, for in those days navigation was not considered much of a science and many of the captains engaged in the West India trade took no observation for longitude, steering southeasterly as near as possible, and when in the latitude of the place they were bound to and well to windward in the northeast trades, steered west. They relied a great deal on dead reckoning, use of the lead and judgment in their coasting as well as foreign voyages.

The voyages made in the winter from southern ports to New York and Boston were always ones of hardship and danger and the earlier schooners and brigs are often reported as delayed by ice and gales, sometimes frozen in the southern rivers and again in Vineyard Sound. How they made their ports without more loss to vessel and crew seems a mystery, for there were few lighthouses, no lightships, channels poorly buoyed, and no towboats or revenue cutters to call on for assistance. Now there are few sailing vessels left, but in every

winter's gale a number of them are always reported in distress and they are much larger and better found than the old ones.

The captains in letters to their owners reporting their arrivals or departures often write of their sails being poor and vessels leaking, but hope to make them go this voyage and get the vessel home, or perhaps make another voyage without making repairs. The Holmes always made the repairs on their vessels in their own building yards, if possible, making the cost much less. Few of Joseph Holmes' vessels were insured and his letters of instructions to his captains usually ended thus: "In case of accident, always remember your vessel is not insured and expend nothing but what is necessary to make your vessel seaworthy. If it is necessary that your vessel should be sold for the benefit of all concerned you will buy her in and draw on me if you think it an object."

The voyages of the vessels owned by the Delanos can only be followed in a few cases and the letters saved do not show so complete a record as do those of Joseph Holmes.

Nothing can now be found about the vessels owned by the Winsors and Whittens, as individuals.

The Severs as owners and builders of vessels in Kingston left little to be recorded about them, except the names, tonnage and year built, which were found in the custom's records of Plymouth and some old account books of 1750 and later years.

There are very few people about here now who have ever seen a ship under all sail at sea. By the word ship, I do not mean anything with sails, but a full rigged ship as used to be sent foreign or, as it was often called, "deep water." Much could be made of some of the voyages of these old Kingston vessels by any one who cared to romance by reading between the lines in the letters written home by the captains to their owners. Many letters to Joseph Holmes end: "Tell my family I am well. Let my wife have a little money if she needs it and tell her we are in good health at present and hope to be home in the spring." It cost twenty-five or thirty cents to send a letter from the south and more from foreign ports without taking into account the labor of writing, and a letter to the owners sufficed for all.

But the story of a vessel is usually a very plain, ordinary affair. They sailed, returned and were repaired, if necessary, and sailed again, often with the same captain and officers for several years, till finally they were sold, wrecked or reported as sailed and never heard from. Those that escaped the dangers of the sea, becoming old and beyond repair, were stripped of sails, spars and rigging and fittings of any value and their weather-beaten hulks were landed in some creek or on some river bank for the tide to ebb and flow in until finally they fell to pieces with nothing but a keel and a few planks and timbers left.

These vessels, while not designed for speed have records of many good passages. For the purpose of carrying the greatest amount of cargo for their length these vessels built by the Holmes' were designed with very full bows and heavy quarters and sterns, one end looking about as full as the other when afloat. The story is told that when one of these vessels was at Rocky Nook wharf being rigged, Captain Otis Baker, of this place, who was somewhat of a joker and commanded the extreme clipper ship, *Herald of the Morning*, engaged in the California trade in the fifties, went down to the wharf to see the new vessel. After looking her over very carefully and making no comments he wrote in large letters with a piece of chalk on the vessel's side near the bow, "This is the Bow." Her sides being painted black made this writing quite conspicuous and caused many a laugh from those who did not know the object of the vessel's fullness forward.

The fruit barks and brigs, of course, were an exception and for their size were very fast and probably their model has never been improved on. A few pictures that are in existence show them to have been very handsome vessels and a credit to the ideas of the designer and builder. The tracks of the fruit vessels, barks and brigs from the Mediterranean ports of Smyrna, Palermo, Messina, and Malaga, where their cargoes were loaded, are the same as the large passenger steamers use today in coming from the Mediterranean to New York and Boston, and when they report, on arrival, having experienced heavy



gales with much water on deck and captain and officers on the bridge many hours and tales of hardship, no one realizes that seventy-five years ago these small vessels were being raced across the North Atlantic in the face of westerly winter gales with the same weather conditions that prevail today and nothing out of the ordinary was reported unless the passage was prolonged and the fruit did not find a good market. Only three of the vessels engaged in this trade were lost while owned by the Holmes', the bark *Abby*, the brig *Bird of the Wave*, and the brig *Frank Henry*.

The smaller vessels, schooners and brigs owned by the Holmes', as well as those owned by the Delanos and Winsors, used in the West India trade and the northern ports of South America, which in those days was called the Spanish Main, were in constant danger of losing their officers and crews by yellow fever and sometimes cholera and the plague. Yellow fever seemed to be always prevalent and although not much is said about it in the letters written to owners it is easy to see the constant danger they were in and the dread the captains had of going to the more unhealthy ports at certain seasons. Letters received by Joseph Holmes tell of loss of officers and crews on board his vessels or of their arriving north with sickness on board and being quarantined. When they died a brief word to that effect to the owner was all that was known; if it was the captain of the vessel, the mate wrote and took charge, perhaps reaching home before the letter, as letters from these small West Indian ports were brought by sailing vessels whose passages were prolonged at certain seasons of the year by unfavorable winds. Sometimes a new captain had to be sent on from home if the mate were not able to take command, which caused great delay and expense.

As late as 1880 Mr. Edward Holmes seldom heard from Captain Thompson, who at that time was in command of his schooner *Mary Baker* in the West India trade, after he left home, until he arrived back, as even then few steamers were running to the West Indies, and the captain was noted for his fast passages with very little delay in port. This Captain Robert Thompson was a Norwegian, a very rugged, powerful man. He first came to Kingston as mate of the brig *Bird of the Wave* and later was employed by Mr. Edward Holmes as master of the different schooners owned by him until the last one was sold. He was a very honest, able shipmaster and commanded the schooner *Mary Baker* for many years, usually chartered to the West Indies with a few trips to the Grand Bank. This schooner had very hard service, as Captain Thompson, previous to taking command, was for several years mate of the later fruit barks owned by the Holmes', receiving in them a thorough training in sail-carrying so that when he became master he was well fitted to see that his vessel was driven to her limit. The story is told by Charles T. Powers of Kingston, who was mate with Captain Thompson in the *Mary Baker* on the voyage, that the *Mary Baker* and *Lucy Holmes*, Captain Clement Eldridge of Chatham, were both chartered to go to Jacmel, Haiti. They laid alongside the same wharf in Boston, both ready to sail, when Mr. Edward Holmes, their owner, who was there to see them off said to the captains, "I don't know about letting you fellows sail at the same time for I am afraid there will be too much sail carrying." Both schooners went to sea together and once clear of the land soon parted company, but when the *Mary Baker* anchored at Jacmel the *Lucy Holmes* was just entering the harbor. This was a very close race for 1,500 miles. Another instance of close sailing between Joseph Holmes' vessels is that of the bark *Egypt* and bark *Fruiterer* both bound to San Francisco, who sighted one another off Cape Horn, soon separated, and met again off Frisco Heads.

Few remember the old captains of the Kingston vessels. Captain Josephus Dawes of Island Creek, Duxbury, and his brother, Captain James H. Dawes of Kingston, being the last survivors of those that lived in this vicinity, both dying very old men and retired from the sea for many years. After Joseph Holmes' death, in 1863, when his vessels were sold, they continued following the sea in command of their own vessels, Captain Josephus Dawes having the bark *Annie W. Weston* built for him, and Captain James the bark *Emma C. Beal*, and also the ship *Matchless*.



## POWERS' LIFE

On the death of Captain Charles T. Powers of Kingston, Massachusetts, a sketch of his life appeared in the *Old Colony Memorial* of Plymouth, 1908. As a deep-water sailor and officer of Kingston vessels the accounts of his voyages in the numerous vessels mentioned are similar to those of all old-time, deep-water sailors on sailing ships who were born and brought up in Kingston and the seacoast towns of this section and who followed the sea before sails gave way to steam.

As his father, Captain Edwin Powers, commanded vessels belonging to the Holmes and Delano families for many years and Captain Charles continued to sail in the Holmes' vessels until the last one was about to be laid up at Kingston before being sold, it seems that what follows should appear in these records as a story of a seafaring life more complete than can now be told of any Kingston man.

Charles Thaddeus Powers was born in the old Tontine house at Rocky Nook, Kingston, April 23, 1848, a son of Captain Edwin and Maria C. (Churchill) Powers, both of whom were natives of Kingston.

Captain Charles T. Powers made his first voyage at the age of fourteen in 1862 in the schooner *Ocean Bird*, Joseph Holmes of Kingston, owner. The *Ocean Bird* was built at the Landing and commanded by his father, Captain Edwin Powers. She sailed from Boston bound for Aux Cayes, a port on the south side of the island of Haiti in the West Indies, and had to run the gauntlet of the Confederate ships of war. This was an exciting trip, full of hairbreadth escapes, but successful nevertheless. The same could be said of the voyage back to Boston. This schooner was at one time during the Civil War the only vessel leaving Boston as a home port to fly the United States flag, all the other vessels leaving port under the British flag, as a matter of protection. Captain Powers made a number of voyages in this vessel to ports on the same island.

The vessels that he afterward made voyages on follow in order: the brig *Jane*, Captain Hoyt of Boston, master; the brig *Afton*, Captain Joseph Wright of Plymouth, master; the schooner *Maria C. Moore*, Captain May, master (the voyage was to Curaçoa an island of the Spanish Main in the Caribbean sea); the schooner *Lucy Holmes* of Kingston, Edward Holmes, owner, Captain Clement Eldridge, master (the voyage was to the islands of the West Indies); schooner *Fisher*, also built in Kingston, Captain David Ellis of Harwich, master (the voyage was to the West Indies, island of Mariguana in the Bahamas, and other ports, a half dozen voyages in all); schooner *Mary Baker*, about the last vessel built at the Landing shipyards, Captain Robert Thompson, master. Years afterward Captain Powers had made a voyage together with Captain Thompson while employed on Lightship No. 6, located off Succonesset Shoals. Captain Powers had made a voyage previously in this schooner, the first voyage she ever made. He also went as mate in her on the last voyage, which was to Cayenne in French Guiana, South America. Captain Dreyfus from France was imprisoned at one time at Cayenne. From this port the schooner proceeded to Turks Island in the Bahamas, where a cargo of salt was loaded for Boston. This was the last voyage Captain Powers made in any Kingston vessel. For a time he was engaged in coast-wise shipping in the schooner *Frank Leeming* which hailed from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, then on the Wellfleet schooner *Elmer E. Wright*, Captain Freeman, master, and later on the schooner *Agnes* of Mystic, Connecticut, Captain Rodman, master. A voyage was made to Key West, Florida, then to Indianola, Texas, from there to Tampico, Mexico, and returning, stopping at New Berne, North Carolina, on the way back to New York City.

Then commenced a series of long and eventful voyages. In 1872 he shipped aboard the bark *Sapho* of Mystic, Connecticut, Captain John Wilbur, master, and sailed for Valparaiso, Chili. From there the bark proceeded to Callao, a port in Peru, and Iquique, a port in Chili, South America, and loaded a cargo of guano for Charleston, South Carolina. May 5, 1873, Captain Powers sailed from New York with Captain Robert Wilbur, brother of the captain of the bark *Sapho*, mentioned above, in the ship *Dauntless* of Mystic, Connecticut, bound for San Francisco, California. The duration of this voyage was 131 days.



After discharging her cargo in the last-named port a cargo of grain was taken aboard and on October 3 of the same year the *Dauntless* sailed for Liverpool, England. In February, after a 120 days' passage, she arrived in Liverpool, and later returned to New York with another cargo.

November 17, 1875, Captain Powers sailed from Boston for Calcutta in the ship *Cromwell*, Captain Edwin Richardson of this town, master. Down Boston harbor they were accompanied by Captain Otis Baker, the late George S. Phillips, Captain Edwin Powers (deceased), and several others from Kingston. They were taken off at the Boston light. The voyage out occupied 132 days. From Calcutta they went to the Island of Mauritius off the east coast of Africa, then back to Calcutta, where they were loaded with linseed for the port of Hull in England. This voyage lasted 150 days. From England they returned in ballast to Boston. This long voyage was the last voyage Captain Richardson made in the *Cromwell*. This was the ship the late Captain William Symmes of this town commanded for many years and while he was master, Edwin Richardson, afterward her commander, went in her as cabin boy. The latter married Captain Symmes' daughter and they reside at present in San Francisco, California.

The longest voyage Captain Powers ever made commenced August 3, 1878, when he sailed in the ship *Mindora* of Salem, for Cape Town near the Cape of Good Hope, Africa, 83 days' passage. She proceeded to Manila, 92 days' passage, lay in port three and one-half months loading manila hemp, and then sailed for Boston, a voyage lasting 178 days. She arrived in Boston, December 3, 1879, 16 months to a day from the time she left Boston. *Mindora* made one more voyage and then was converted into a barge.

As second mate of the brig *Stella*, Captain Davis of Long Island, New York, master, he sailed on January 10, 1880, for Buenos Ayres in South America. From there they sailed about 300 miles up the Rio de la Plata to the city of Rosario, where they took on a cargo of wool, and returning arrived in Boston, July 19, 1880.

Captain Powers' next voyage was from New York, January 7, 1881, as second mate of the bark *James S. Stone*, Captain John Weston of Duxbury, master. Captain Weston is at present one of the Boston Port Wardens. They touched first at Port Adelaide, Australia, and then went to New South Wales, where they loaded coal for Shanghai, China, next made two round trips from Shanghai to Nagasaki, Japan, after which the bark took on board a cargo of tea and sailed for New York, the voyage lasting 110 days. This was in 1882.

In February, 1883, he sailed from New York as second mate on the bark *Nehemiah Gibson* of Boston, Captain Fred C. Bailey of Kingston, master. Port Adelaide in Australia and Hong Kong in China were the ports visited. It was a memorable voyage out. They struck a gale of wind between the Cape of Good Hope and Port Adelaide and the seas ran mountain high. Oil, a part of the cargo, was tried by Captain Bailey as an experiment, and it had the effect of smoothing the waves a good deal. The bark was running three weeks with a fair wind all the time.

In 1885, Captain Powers went as second mate on the bark *Neried*, which belonged to H. H. Flitner of Boston, from Portland, Maine, to Buenos Ayres, then to a port in Brazil, where she took on a cargo of sugar. This was delivered in January, 1886. This bark passed through a terrible gale on Christmas night before her arrival.

In April, 1889, Captain Powers, as first mate of the brig *Cameo*, Captain Molman, master, sailed from New London, Connecticut, to Boston, where she unloaded her cargo and took on board a portion of another cargo. In Portland, Maine, she finished loading and then departed for St. Ann's Bay and Montego Bay, on the Island of Jamaica. Leaving these ports she went to Falmouth on the same island and received a cargo of logwood roots for Philadelphia. She reached that port July 7, 1889. The vessel was sold or changed hands soon after her arrival. Captain Powers returned to Kingston to live.

His stay ashore was brief. May 24, 1890, he took command of the Vineyard Sound lightship and was on her about three months when he was transferred to the Great Round Shoal lightship. In 1892 he took the Old South Shoal lightship from New Bedford to

Charleston, South Carolina. Upon his return he was given command of Lightship No. 6, located off Succoneset Shoal. He was on this lightship about five years.

He retired from a seafaring life in 1898 and returned to Kingston, where he has since lived, respected by all who are acquainted with him.

The following extracts are taken from a diary that was kept by Cornelius A. Bartlett, a ship carpenter of Kingston. (This covers the thirty years before Captain Powers commenced going to sea and gives as good an account of the life of a ship carpenter as Captain Powers' life does that of a sailor.)

- |                       |  |                  |  |
|-----------------------|--|------------------|--|
| Jan. 1st, 1883        | First part of month worked on a schooner for Deacon Lysander Bartlett.   | Mar. 27th, 1834  | She was taken down the river. Stopped on the point of the Nook. The tides fell off and she remained there till they came up. While there she was mostly rigged. From there she was taken to Rocky Nook wharf. Finished rigging, took in ballast, etc., and sailed for Boston. Stopped in the Cow Yard a few days to take in a little more ballast, then went to Boston. Arrived Apr. 29th. We had a very pleasant run along shore, summerlike day. I worked aloft most of the day putting up top hamper. I put "over head" the most of the rigging of this vessel. I stopped on board of her until the 7th of May. I came home by way of Hingham through Duxbury. The ship sailed the 9th for Savannah, Captain Perez H. Sampson, Mr. Edward Holmes, chief mate. |
| Feb. 19th, 1833       | Cutting ship timber for Deacon Bartlett.   |                  |  |
| Mar. 4th<br>5th, 1833 | Severe snowstorm followed by very cold weather. Freezing the river several inches thick.   | Mar. 14th, 1834  | I shipped on board the Jones River Packet, Joseph Bartlett, master. Went to Boston.  |
| The 7th, 1833         | I had shipped on board the Jones River Packet, my father, master. We were ready to go out of the river, but ice not gone until the 15th when we sailed for Boston, arriving the same evening. Carried mostly wood and brought home merchandise the 22nd. A fine run along shore. | July 4th, 1834   | It is a fine day but I am confined in Rocky Nook wharf getting in fish. All my comrades enjoying life with the fair sex on excursions, etc. This is rather hard, but such is life.   |
| July 8th, 1833        | Wm. D. Winsor commenced running a packet for Boston, <i>Atlanta Sloop</i> , from Rocky Nook Wharf. She is a remarkably good sailer.  | July 6th, 1834   | Sailed loaded with fish.   |
| Sept. 10th, 1833      | Robert Cook who had been with us most of the season left us this trip unwell.  | Sept. 12th, 1834 | Left the Packet.   |
| Sept. 16th, 1833      | Col. Sever's new ship <i>Russell</i> went down the river. I helped get her to Rocky Nook Wharf.  | Sept. 13th, 1834 | Commenced working on a ship in Deacon Bartlett's yard for Col. John Sever. Painting and rigging.   |
| Oct. 15th, 1833       | Ship <i>Russell</i> sailed.  | Sept. 22nd, 1834 | Put up the shears and set her masts. Captain Nat'l Foster, Captain Zebulon Bisbee, Captain Solomon Davie, riggers.   |
| Nov. 26th, 1833       | Worked on schooner <i>January</i> getting out plank.   | Oct. 3rd, 1834   | Launched the ship; took her the same tide to Mr. Holmes' wharf below. In turning her at the wharf her forefoot caught on a rock opposite the wharf and there she remained. When the next tide came she fell over on her side. It was in the night. We were setting between decks waiting for the tide at the time. I could walk fore and aft on her keel. She  |
| Dec. 23rd, 1833       | We went down the harbor in schooner <i>January</i> liting a vessel with sea (C) coal.  |                  |  |
| Dec. 28th, 1833       | I helped get a schooner from the bay loaded with plank for Deacon Bartlett. I helped unload her. He is building for Col. Sever.  |                  |  |
| March 1834            | First part of month I helped Nat'l Foster rig a schooner belonging to Col. John Sever on the stocks in Deacon Bartlett's yard. After she was launched we took her to Rocky Nook wharf. She is bound to Baltimore. Captain John Fearo, master.                                    |                  |  |
| Mar. 24th, 1834       | The ship <i>Rialto</i> was launched from Mr. Joseph Holmes' yard. A very successful launch.  |                  |  |



- swung off the rock and the next day we righted her. The packet was lying at wharf, we took her purchase to the head of the ship's masts and she came up easily. It damaged the ship badly. She showed it in her sheer. This was the ship *Charles*.
- Oct. 6th, 1834 Took her down the river on the same tide. Stopped at the turn of the channel.
- Oct. 7th, 1834 Took her to Rocky Nook wharf. Worked on the ship all this month.
- Nov. 1st, 1834 The ship left the wharf and came to off the Rope Walk when I left her. (They evidently had a great deal of trouble in moving this ship in the river so much so that Mr. Bartlett wrote a more complete account of what he was engaged in doing than usual. It was an unfortunate beginning for a new ship and we can but wonder if she continued to be unfortunate after getting to sea and if any sailors, knowing of her early mishaps, were superstitious about going in her.)
- Jan. 27th, 1835 Loading the schooner *December*, Edward Holmes, master; with fish at Mr. Holmes' fish yard.
- Jan. 31st, 1835 Went to Boston discharged cargo and came home the 6th of Feb. There was ice in the bay but nothing to hinder us coming up the river. Loaded again with fish and left for Boston, Feb. 22nd. Sold the fish and came home the 28th of February.
- March 1835 First part of month cold, vessel frozen in at Rocky Nook wharf. The 22nd we left for Boston the wind being unfavorable we anchored in the bay. The wind increasing to a gale, east, surging in a sea the chain parted and lost our anchor. Came up to the Duck Trap. Let go our best lower anchor and came home. The gale was heavy.
- Mar. 25th, 1835 Went to Boston, discharged and came home. (The Duck Trap he speaks of is a small channel that leads to Island Creek, Duxbury, from the Kingston channel near the mouth of Jones River.)
- Apr. 9th, 1835 The Jones River Packet, my father, master, commenced running.
- Apr. 28th, 1835 The Jones River Packet was lost on the Toddy Rocks in Boston Harbor, Hull. My father, master. No lives lost, but vessel a total loss. They came in by the light (Boston Light) the evening before. It was very dark and could not see the way. It was ebb tide and they expected she would come off all right the next tide, but the wind came out east and blew a gale making it very rough. They saved most of their traps and brought them up to town (Boston). We were there in the *December* and they put on board our vessel and came home with us the 2nd of May. Bad affair!
- May 2nd, 1835 Left (Kingston) for Boston in the *December*, my father, master. Captain Edward Holmes, left. Took in salt from the ship and came home.
- May 16th, 1835 Schooner *Eveline* sailed for the Grand Bank.
- Aug. 10th, 1835 Came home from Boston loaded with salt took from the ship *Rialto*.
- Aug. 30th, 1835 Came from Boston. Head winds and foggy. The schooner *Cordova*, Benjamin Delano came in with us from the Grand Bank with a cargo of 42,000 fish. (He was making trips to Boston and back in the *December*, schooner, until Oct. 13th, when he left and joined the sloop *Algerine*, Solomon Davie, master. He remained on her until she was hauled up at Rocky Nook wharf for the winter, Dec. 12th.)
- Feb. 1836 Very cold. No communication with Boston by water for six weeks.
- Mar. 5th, 1836 At this time painting on a new schooner in Deacon Bartlett's yard. She belongs to Col. John Sever, (name) *Exchange*.
- Apr. 2nd, 1836 Launched the schooner.
- Apr. 13th, 1836 She is rigged and we took her to Plymouth. Sold there to Richard Holmes.
- Apr. 24th, 1836 Worked on schooner (*Hope*) belonging to Rufus B. Bradford.
- May 12th, 1836 Sloop *Algerine* sunk off Hyannis, Bacon, master. Crew saved. She had been out south.
- June 16th, 1836 Sailed from Rocky Nook wharf in the good sloop *Atlanta*. William D. Winsor, master. Bound for Boston. (At this time he was twenty-three years old and had tired of coasting and went to learn the carpenter's trade with his brother, David, who was at work in Newton. In May, 1837, the diary shows that Alexander Holmes was keeping store opposite the Green in Kingston.)

- April 1840 Worked on a ship in Deacon Bartlett's yard, Col. Sever's, until May 14th.
- Mar. 3rd, 1841 Worked on a ship in Deacon Bartlett's yard for Col. Sever.
- June until Aug., 1841 Worked for Mr. Holmes on schooner *June*.
- Feb. 1842 Working for my brother David on a little brigantine in Deacon Bartlett's yard. Built by the Deacon, his sons, and Spencer Drew, named the *Rodney*. She was sold in July at Boston with very little profit.
- Jan. 22nd, 1844 Commenced working in the shipyard for N. D. Drew, 75 cts. per day.
- May 1844 Working on a schooner for Mr. Joseph Holmes.
- July 1844 Joinering a brigantine for Mr. Benjamin Delano in Deacon Bartlett's yard (named) *Reindeer*. (Wm. T. Davis of Plymouth in his book entitled "Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian" mentions the brig *Reindeer* as one of the vessels that carried Plymouth passengers to California for the gold fields in 1849, having been purchased by Dr. Samuel Merritt of Plymouth of her owners in Kingston. She sailed from New York in the summer of 1849 with Dr. Merritt, as many passengers as could be accommodated, and a cargo of general merchandise, arriving in San Francisco that autumn, when she was sold.)
- Jan. 1845 Joinering a schooner for Mr. Benjamin Delano in Deacon Bartlett's yard and one for Mr. Alexander Holmes in his yard above at the same time. Both finished May 10th.
- Nov. 8th, 1845 The cars commenced running from Boston to Plymouth.
- Jan. 1st, 1846 Commenced joinering a bark, *Truman*, for Mr. Alexander Holmes in his yard.
- Feb. and March 1846 Working on bark.
- May 1846 Finished the bark. She is at the lower wharf. In coming through the Rail Road bridge with the bark got in contact with the draw. Detained the train, but finally came to the wharf. This was June 1st.
- Jan. and Feb. 1848 I am working in the upper shipyard for N. D. Drew on bark, *Stafford*, 75 cts. per day. Alexander Holmes, owner.
- Dec. 1848 Launched the bark *Stafford*.
- Dec. 15th, 1848 Went down the river with her.
- Dec. 21st, 1848 Went to the Cow Yard with her.
- Dec. 22nd, 1848 A strong N. W. gale. The steamboat that took her to Boston, *R. B. Forbes*, lie alongside all day.
- Dec. 23rd, 1848 Moderated and steamer took her to Boston. I stopped on board of her fishing some jobs until she sailed. Captain Searles, master; bound for Smyrna. Came home the 31st of December.
- July 7th, 1849 Working on a brig for Joseph Holmes.
- Feb. 21st, 1850 Commenced ship carpentering for Deacon Lysander Bartlett in his yard. \$1.00 per day. A pleasant, mild month, no ice or snow.
- May 26th, 1850 Mr. Alexander Holmes is building a bark in his yard. N. D. Drew, naval constructor.
- Oct. 1850 Framed a workshop for N. D. Drew and Uncle John (Drew) in their shipyard at \$1.25 per day. (This is the building lately used as a boatshop for many years by Captain Edward A. Ransom. He moving it from where it was built near the Alms House to its present location.)
- July 1851 At work on a ship, the *Joseph Holmes*.
- Sept. 24th, 1851 Launched the ship. It belongs to Mr. Joseph Holmes and built in his yard, which was just north of the O. C. R. R. track on Jones River.
- Oct. 23rd, 1851 Went down the river with the ship yesterday. Took her to the Fish Wharf the first tide after she started. Stopped on the Point of the Nook next tide. That night took her to Rocky Nook wharf. (This ship was 611 tons and the largest one ever built in Kingston.)
- Feb. 23rd, 1852 Commenced joinering on bark, *Messenger Bird*, belonging to Mr. Alexander Holmes. Henry Simmons, boss joiner.
- April 1852 Launched the bark. She is a long-legged craft, very cranky. After she left the ways she fell over on her side. Her masts were in. She remained in this condition till the next day when she was righted and taken to the wharf below the Rail Road bridge. They had considerable trouble getting her down the river to Rocky Nook wharf and down the bay. It required a good deal of ballast to keep her up. (This was the bark that the Captain ran away with after the Holmes' had sold her.)



May 15th, 1852	Commenced joinering a bark for Mr. Lysander Bartlett, Jr., in his yard. She belongs to Benjamin Delano and Sons.	Apr. 16th, 1855	At work on schooner, Lysander B. Delano and Son, at Rocky Nook wharf. Put in a new gang way.
Aug. 19th, 1853	Joinering a little brig for Alexander Holmes in his yard. N. D. Drew, builder. (This was the brig or schooner, <i>Frank Henry</i> ).	Aug. 7th, 1855	At work for Mr. Joseph Holmes on a bark in his shipyard, 9 shillings per day.
Jan. 16th, 1854	Commenced joinering on schooner, <i>Cordova</i> . She is being new topped. She lies on the marsh at Deacon Bartlett's yard. Benjamin Delano and Sons, owners.	Nov. 8th, 1855	N. D. Drew went to Buffalo, New York, to work, shipbuilding, 1856. Went to work for Mr. Edward Holmes on a bark in his father's yard, joinering. \$1.50 per day.
Jan. 21st, 1854	Brigantine <i>Frank Henry</i> went out of the river. Launched the 19th, bound for Boston. (This vessel was lost on her second voyage, never heard from.)	Oct. 15th	Launched the bark, <i>Neapolitan</i> .
		Sept. 17th, 1858	Deacon Lysander Bartlett died, 81 years.
		Aug. 14th, 1860	Working for Benjamin Delano and Son on brigantine <i>Monte Christo</i> . She is being repaired.

This diary is now in the Kingston Public Library and the extracts that have been given show how these men employed themselves in the different building yards here at the time of their greatest activity and what one of them did on the vessels when not engaged in working at his trade.

His trade was that of a ship joiner, which is a carpenter who does the finishing off on a vessel after she is timbered and planked and nearing completion. These men worked in the yards as their services were required on the vessels under construction. All these old ship carpenters and riggers were men used to manning vessels if crews were needed to take them to Boston or bring them home from there.

When Alexander Holmes was president of the Old Colony Rail Road Company a locomotive went through the drawbridge into Fort Point Channel which separates South Boston from Boston. The railroad wrecking crew being unable to handle the situation as their equipment in those days was limited, President Holmes at once sent for Ichabod Peterson of Kingston, master rigger in his father's building yard, who came to Boston with a gang of riggers and ship carpenters and by the use of the heavy blocks and falls used in masting vessels soon had the locomotive raised from the bottom of the channel and traffic restored. This is an example of what might be demanded of the men working in these yards if an emergency should arise, and it was always stand by for a call with them.

The condition of the river and bay in winter as to ice and storms is mentioned several times in the diary showing how the packets were often delayed in their trips to Boston, which must have been of great inconvenience to those living here and depending on water transportation for the movement of merchandise.

The first running of a train as told is interesting, as a letter of Joseph Holmes to his son, Captain Paraclete Holmes, master of the ship *Herculean* at New Orleans, dated May 26, 1844, concludes, by saying, "We are going to have a railroad from Plymouth to Boston." The railroad crossed the river over a drawbridge, thus separating the upper and lower building yards, increasing the labor of moving vessels between the yards by having to pass through the draw with them, and it would be natural that the coming of the first train would be an event to be noticed by the men working in these yards beside the tracks, as was done by Mr. Bartlett and recorded in his diary. No doubt, the event was noted by others and also recorded, as keeping a diary was a common thing to do in those days, but it is unfortunate so few have been preserved. The drawbridge continued to be used by the railroad company for several years after work in the upper yards had been given up and when in need of repairs it was replaced by a permanent bridge, the company considering it cheaper to take out and reset the masts of any vessel that might wish to pass through than to maintain a draw. It was because of this old drawbridge and a question of the right of the railroad company in discontinuing a bridge of this type over tide-water



that was navigable for vessels that saved Mr. Lewis H. Keith of Kingston, owner of sloop yacht, *Siren*, quite a sum of money. Captain N. B. Watson, who commanded the *Siren*, was accustomed to haul her out in the winter on his land to the north of his boat-house above the bridge, first taking out her mast below the bridge. Needing a new mast one season, one was bought in Boston and sent by railroad freight. On arrival it was found the freight charges were very high and Captain Watson at once said if the railroad company did not make these charges more reasonable he would mast the sloop when she lay above the bridge and demand the right to go to sea. Under these circumstances the company might have had to take out the mast and reset it below the bridge, so they decided it would be less expensive to abate the freight bill than to do the work or bring the case before the courts.

A number of the Kingston vessels are spoken of in the diary and I used what was told about them in giving their story. I have repeated this in the extracts in order that they might read more connectedly.

The pictures of the spar, sail and sheer plans of the Kingston vessels were taken from the original plans, which were made by Nathaniel D. Drew of Kingston. The first record in the Plymouth Custom House showing him as a builder and master carpenter is in 1839 when he is recorded as the master carpenter in the building of the schooner *Cohannet* for Alexander Holmes, owner. These plans were of some of the vessels designed by him from the date of 1839 to 1865 when he was employed by Alexander, Joseph and Edward Holmes. Although incomplete as to detail in sails and rigging, it is easy to see the decided improvement in the design of a vessel between these years. They were found in the boat-shop of the late Captain John N. Drew, a younger brother of Nathaniel D. Drew, and were given me by a Miss Olmstead, who had purchased the homestead after the death of the Captain. I had seen them many times while the boat-shop was used by Captain Drew, but with no thought that they would ever be of value to any one. I had always been interested in vessels, especially those built in Kingston, and saved the plans. It was not until the photographs of the pictures of the Kingston vessels were taken for this story that the Drew spar plans were remembered. I found, on examination, that with the exception of the *Sicilian* and *Fruiterer*, no pictures were known to be in existence. The plans of these two, however, appear in this record. There are three half hulled or working models, made by N. D. Drew, from which the *Trueman*, *Stafford* and *Frank Henry* were built. That of the *Trueman* is now in the marine room of the Peabody Museum of Salem and the *Stafford* and *Frank Henry* are owned by Alexander Holmes of Kingston.

The sheer plans show the vessels as they were modeled, so the other plans where no model or picture exists are correct as to the general appearance of the hull and spars. Some show the masts and standing rigging, one a sail-plan and a few the masts with yards crossed, with lifts, but no braces. Mr. Drew, in his designs, gave his vessels the same style of figure or billet board, with the exception of the bark *Abby* and bark *Sicilian*. The bark *Abby* had a figurehead of a young girl with long, flowing hair, and he evidently did not feel that he was artist enough to draw the female form on his plan, so left the bark with only a bracket for ornament on the stem where a figure would stand when in place. The sheer and spar plan of the *Sicilian* show for a figurehead a crude drawing of what was intended to be a Sicily man, which is also shown in the painting. As there is a picture of this bark and also of the *Fruiterer* under sail no attempt was made to photograph their plans.

In most cases the plans were drawn in pencil on sheets of ordinary brown paper about three feet square and a vessel's plan was drawn on each side to save paper, their names being given on the plan. All but three of the plans had to be traced on tracing paper as the originals were soiled with age and the pencil lines were often too faint for the taking of a satisfactory photograph. On this account, the figures giving length of spars and standing rigging, were omitted for even if shown they would have been very small and not easily read.

Mr. Drew was evidently a designer of superior skill. While in the employ of Alexander Holmes he was called on to design vessels that were built in the Joseph Holmes and Lysander Bartlett (senior and junior) shipyards as shown by their names on the plans and custom records.

Today, few, if any families in the country can show so many pictures, spar and sail plans and models of vessels built and owned by their people so many years ago as the Holmes family of Kingston. When we consider that at this time the greater part of these were made seventy-five years ago and only recently was any thought given for their preservation, it is remarkable that after the lapse of so many years such a number of plans and pictures of the Kingston vessels were found. Unlike other shipbuilders or owners, they owned and sailed their vessels after they were built, or as Joseph Holmes writes, "fitted for sea and sent to sea on my own account and risk."

The sail plans of the vessels, with the exception of the bark *Neapolitan*, are taken from the designers' sheer and spar plans and show how they looked under sail.

In old records and reports the captains of vessels were spoken of as Master Mariners which distinguished them from captains in the Army or Naval service.

These old shipmasters were very particular as to how they were addressed and anyone who had been master of a vessel was always given the title of Captain, although the captain of a fishing vessel was often called skipper.

As far as is known today, the following list of names are those of the Master Mariners who resided in Kingston and commanded Kingston vessels.

The three Dawes brothers lived in Duxbury near the line between Kingston and Duxbury, and as their associations were more with Kingston than Duxbury I have included them in the list of Kingston's Master Mariners.

#### KINGSTON'S MASTER MARINERS

EBENEZER ADAMS	ALLEN DAWES	EDWIN POWERS
CHARLES ADAMS	JOSEPHUS DAWES	
WILLIAM S. ADAMS	JAMES H. DAWES	CHARLES ROBBINS
HENRY L. ADAMS		EDWARD A. RANSOM
	JOHN FAERO	
JOSEPH BARTLETT	EZRA FULLER	PEREZ H. SAMPSON
JOSEPH H. BARTLETT	JAMES FULLER	NATHANIEL SOULE
SETH BARTLETT	EPHRAIM FULLER	SAMUEL SOULE
GEORGE BREWSTER	ALEXANDER FULLER	WILLIAM SIMMONS
MARTIN BREWSTER	ALBERT FULLER	
AARON BREWSTER		ROBERT THOMPSON
CONSIDER BRADFORD	ELISHA T. HOLMES	
ELLIS BRADFORD	BARTLETT HOLMES	THADDEUS R. WASHBURN
THOMAS BATES	ROBERT HOLMES	PHILIP WASHBURN
WILLIAM BISBY	PARACLETE HOLMES	HARVEY WASHBURN
ALEXANDER BACON	EDWARD HOLMES	ALBERT WASHBURN
N. BACON		CEPHAS WASHBURN
WILLIAM H. BACON	FRANCIS JOHNSON	SAMUEL N. WASHBURN
WILLIAM H. BEATON	WINSLOW JOHNSON	MELZAR WHITTEN
CALVIN BRYANT		PETER WINSOR
	ELISHA MCLAUTHLIN	ELBRIDGE G. WINSOR
BENJAMIN COOK		CLARK WINSOR
DAVID CHURCHILL		NATHAN B. WATSON

Many Kingston men sailed on Kingston vessels as officers and crew but as masters commanded vessels that hailed from other ports, and so their names do not appear in this list of Kingston's Master Mariners.



The following is a record of the vessels built at the Jones River Landing and owned in Kingston, Massachusetts, from 1776-1898.

NAME OF VESSEL	TYPE	TONS	PLACE AND YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	OWNER
<i>Independence</i>	Brig		Kingston, 1776	William Drew	{ Provincial Govt. of Mass. or the State of Mass. Bay.
<i>Mars</i>	Ship		Kingston, 1778	William Drew	Provincial Govt. of Mass.
<i>Hannah*</i>	Sloop	52	Kingston, 1782		B. Hedge, Plymouth
<i>Success</i>	Schooner	52	Kingston, 1784		Joseph Prior, Duxbury
<i>Defiance</i>	Sloop	55	Kingston, 1784		Dura Wadsworth, Duxbury
<i>Sally</i>	Schooner	60	Kingston, 1786	Drews	Isaac Barnes, Plymouth
<i>Sea Flower</i>	Schooner	54	Kingston		In Plymouth
<i>Amelia</i>	Schooner	36	1787		William Drew, <i>et al.</i>
<i>Delphine</i>	Schooner	22	Kingston, 1787		Nicholas Davis, <i>et al.</i> , Plymouth
<i>Charlotta</i>	Schooner	45	Kingston, 1788		Nathaniel Thomas, David Beal
<i>William</i>	Sloop	44	Kingston, 1789		William Drew
<i>Harmony</i>	Sloop	36	Kingston, 1789		Seth Drew, Cornelius Drew
<i>Lucille</i>	Schooner	46	Kingston, 1789		In Plymouth
<i>Drake</i>	Schooner	43	Kingston, 1791		Seth Luce, <i>et al.</i> , Plymouth
<i>Eagle</i>	Schooner	30	Kingston, 1792		Jabez Churchill, Plymouth
<i>Christiana</i>	Sloop	41	Kingston, 1792		Cornelius Drew, Seth Drew
<i>Sally</i>	Schooner	32	Kingston, 1793		In Plymouth
<i>Nymph</i>	Schooner	41	Kingston, 1794		William Drew, Jr.
<i>Sea Flower</i>	Schooner		Scituate, 1794		Ebenezer Lobdell, Plympton
<i>Betsey</i>	Sloop	60	Kingston, 1795		Samuel Robbins
<i>Fortune</i>	Sloop	44	Kingston, 1795		Seth Drew, Cornelius Drew
<i>Nancy</i>	Sloop	57	Duxbury, 1795		John Sever, Merchant
<i>Sally</i>	Sloop	39	Kingston, 1796		{ David Beal, Joseph Bartlett, Stephen Drew, Sylvanus Thomas, Charles Holmes, Lysander Bartlett, Jedediah Holmes, Jr.
<i>James</i>	Schooner	78	Kingston, 1796		{ David Beal, John Thomas, Nathaniel Thomas, Peleg Tupper
<i>Saba</i>	Schooner	92	Kingston, 1796		{ Clement Drew, James Drew, Zenas Drew
<i>Sally</i>	Schooner	24	North River		Simeon Washburn
<i>Federalist</i>	Schooner	100	Kingston, 1799		Jesse Harlow, Plymouth
<i>Sarah</i>	Schooner	100	Kingston, 1799	William Drew	John Sever
<i>Eliza</i>	Brig	134	Kingston, 1800		Robert Hobart, Plymouth
<i>Charity</i>	Schooner	100	Kingston, 1801		Peleg Tupper, William Drew
<i>Two Pollys</i>	Brig	250	Bridgewater, 1801	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Charles</i>	Schooner	70	Kingston, 1802	Seth Drew	{ Seth Drew, David Beal, Sylvanus Thomas, Cornelius Drew, Ebenezer Adams
<i>Lucy</i>	Sloop	74	Kingston, 1802		{ Stephen Drew, Josiah Bartlett, Lysander Bartlett
<i>Algol</i>	Brig	220	Bridgewater, 1802	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Rover</i>	Schooner	76	Kingston, 1803		William Davis, Plymouth
<i>Two Sisters</i>	Sloop	44	Kingston, 1803	Seth Drew	Peter Winsor, Benjamin Delano
<i>Five Sisters</i>	Schooner	89	Kingston, 1803		Stephen Drew
<i>Minerva</i>	Schooner	74	Kingston, 1804	Stephen Drew	{ David Beal, Pelham Brewster, Spencer Brewster, John Gray, Jr.
<i>Harmony</i>	Sloop	49	Kingston, 1804	Lysander Bartlett	{ Seth Bartlett, Lysander Bartlett, Seth Drew

\*This is the first vessel built in Kingston of which there is any record in the Plymouth Custom House.

## SHIPS OF KINGSTON

NAME OF VESSEL	TYPE	TONS	PLACE AND YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	OWNER
<i>Mary</i>	Schooner	82	Scituate, 1804		Benjamin Delano
<i>Hero</i>	Schooner	100	Kingston, 1804	Zenas Drew	Benjamin Barnes, Plymouth
<i>Hannah</i>	Sloop	34	Scituate, 1789		George Russell, 1804
<i>Columbus</i>	Sloop	75	Kingston, 1804	Stephen Drew	Ezra Weston, Duxbury
<i>Industry</i>	Schooner	96	Duxbury, 1800		Peter Winsor, 1805
<i>Enterprise</i>	Sloop	47	Kingston, 1805	Lysander Bartlett	Samuel Robbins, Plymouth
<i>Three Thomases</i>	Brig	175	Kingston, 1805		{ Nathaniel Foster, John Thomas Nathaniel Thomas
<i>Morning Star</i>	Schooner	77	Duxbury, 1802		Benjamin Delano, 1805
<i>Byron</i>	Schooner	38	Duxbury, 1795		{ Lemuel Fuller, Josiah Fuller, Solomon Holmes
<i>Resolution</i>	Schooner	111	Kingston, 1805		Stephen Drew, Ellis Drew
<i>Lydia</i>	Sloop	58	Kingston, 1806	{ Stephen Drew David Beal, Jr.	
<i>Alexander</i>	Schooner	112	Bridgew't'r, 1806	Joseph Holmes	{ Bartlett Holmes, Kingston Seth Johnson, Boston Solomon Keith, Bridgewater
<i>Prudence</i>	Sloop	53	Duxbury		David Beal, Peleg Bartlett
<i>Solon</i>	Sloop	55	Kingston, 1806	Lysander Bartlett	{ George Russell, William Sever, Peleg Tupper, Jedediah Holmes, Jr. Spencer Brewster, Joseph Bartlett
<i>Hiram</i>	Schooner	107	Kingston, 1806		Benjamin Barnes, Plymouth
<i>Lucy</i>	Ship	208	Kingston, 1806	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Trident</i>	Brig	130	Bridgew't'r, 1805	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Brunette</i>	Brig	180	Kingston, 1806	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Apollo</i>	Sloop	54	Kingston, 1807	Lysander Bartlett	Ezra Weston, Duxbury
<i>Junio</i>	Schooner	62	Kingston, 1807	Isaac Drew	Zebulon Bisbee
<i>Dolly</i>	Schooner	105	Kingston, 1807	William Drew	{ Ellis Bradford, Joseph Holmes, Lewis Holmes, William Drew
<i>Charlotte</i>	Brig	190	Kingston, 1807		Peter Winsor
<i>Thomas</i>	Brig	137	Kingston, 1807		William Davis, Plymouth, 1811
<i>Betsey</i>	Schooner	92	Brunswick, Me., 1808		Bartlett Holmes, Jos. Holmes, Jr.
<i>Roxana</i>	Sloop	66	Kingston, 1809	William Drew	Bartlett Holmes, Joseph Holmes
<i>William</i>	Schooner	120	Kingston, 1809	Abijah Drew	Peter Winsor
<i>Betsey</i>	Sloop	48	Kingston, 1810	Lysander Bartlett	Jedediah Holmes, Jr., David Beal
<i>George</i>	Brig	145	Kingston, 1810	William Drew	Ellis Bradford, David Beal, Jr.
<i>Belus</i>	Sloop	48	Kingston, 1810	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, <i>et al.</i>
<i>Admittance</i>	Ship	238	Kingston, 1810		In Duxbury
<i>Magnet</i>	Ship	371	Kingston, 1811	Timothy Drew	In Plymouth
<i>Dolphin</i>	Schooner	61	Kingston, 1811	Lysander Bartlett	Benjamin Delano, <i>et al.</i>
<i>Byron</i>	Schooner	38	Duxbury, 1795		Martin Howard, 1811
<i>Red Bird</i>	Schooner	55	Kingston, 1811	William Drew	Benjamin Delano
<i>Alexander</i>	Schooner	95	Kingston, 1812		Peter Winsor
<i>Constellation</i>	Pink Stern Schn'er	30	Gloucester, 1811		William Winsor, 1812
<i>Miranda</i>	Schooner	95	Kingston, 1812	William Drew	Peter Winsor
<i>Elizabeth</i>	Schooner	300	Kingston, 1812	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Minos</i>	Sloop	56	Kingston, 1812	Lysander Bartlett	William Stephens, 1824
<i>Water Snake</i>	Schooner	20	Kingston, 1813	Drews	{ James Sever, Cephas Washburn, William Drew, Joseph Foster, Martin Stetson, Spencer Chandler, Abijah Drew
<i>Fin Back</i>	Schooner	22	Kingston, 1813	Stephen	Peleg Bartlett, Jos. Holmes, <i>et al.</i>
<i>Eliza</i>	Pink Stern Schn'er	23	Gloucester, 1801		Thomas Bates, 1814



## SHIPS OF KINGSTON

33

NAME OF VESSEL	TYPE	TONS	PLACE AND YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	OWNER
<i>Flying Fish</i>	Schooner	68	Duxbury, 1813		Peter Winsor, 1814
<i>Sarah</i>	Schooner	37	Kingston, 1814	Ellis Bradford	Ellis Bradford
<i>Attractive</i>	Schooner	126	Duxbury, 1814		Melzar Whitten
<i>Lucy</i>	Brig	140	Kingston, 1814	Joseph Holmes	
<i>Indian Chief</i>	Brig	157	Kingston, 1815	Stephen Drew	Stephen Drew
<i>Agenoria</i>	Brig	129	Kingston, 1815	William Drew	Benjamin Delano
<i>Lilly</i>	Schooner	48	Duxbury, 1815		Thomas Bates
<i>Morning Star</i>	Schooner	77	Duxbury, 1805		Benjamin Delano
<i>Fair Lady</i>	Schooner		Hanover, 1816		Peter Winsor
<i>Ann Gurley</i>	Schooner	105	Kingston, 1816	Lewis Holmes	Ellis Bradford
<i>Cordelia</i>	Sloop	58	Kingston, 1816	Zeneth Wadsworth	Peter Winsor
<i>Only Son</i>	Schooner	103	Kingston, 1816	Charles Bartlett	Benjamin Delano, James Fuller
<i>Lilly</i>	Schooner	28	Duxbury, 1793		Jos. Holmes, Jr., Thos. Bates, 1816
<i>Leo</i>	Schooner	61	Kingston, 1816		Caleb Bates
<i>Leo</i>	Sloop	61	Kingston, 1817	Lysander Bartlett	{ Peleg Bartlett, John Sever, James Sever, Melzar Whitten
<i>Milo</i>	Schooner	86	Kingston, 1817	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph Holmes, Lewis Holmes, Solomon Corey
<i>Celar</i>	Schooner	60	Kingston, 1817	Richard Everson	{ John Sever, Jedediah Holmes, Jr., Benjamin Delano, James Sever
<i>Caleb</i>	Schooner	60	Kingston, 1817		{ John Sever, Benjamin Delano, James Sever, Jr., Melzar Whitten
<i>Caroline</i>	Schooner	120	Chatham, Conn., 1817		{ Joseph Holmes, Jr., Lewis Holmes, Jedediah Holmes, Jr.
<i>Fornax</i>	Schooner	74	Kingston, 1818		John Sever
<i>Five Sisters</i>	Schooner	100	Kingston, 1818		Stephen Drew
<i>Albacore</i>	Schooner	58	Kingston, 1818		Benjamin Delano, 1823
<i>Hope</i>	Schooner	64	Kingston, 1818	Joseph Holmes	Peter Winsor
<i>Rambler</i>	Ship	320	Kingston, 1818	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Paraclete</i>	Schooner	95	Kingston, 1819	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, Ebenezer Lobdell
<i>Olive</i>	Schooner	65	Kingston, 1819	Charles Bartlett	John Cook, Provincetown
<i>Chili</i>	Ship	278	Kingston, 1819	Lewis Holmes	Gethro Mitchell, Nantucket
<i>Echo</i>	Schooner	69	Kingston, 1819		Abraham Jackson, Plymouth
<i>Falcon</i>	Sloop	41	Sandwich, 1821		{ John Sever, Benjamin Delano, Melzar Whitten, James Sever, Jr., Joseph Holmes, Jr.
<i>Hunter</i>	Schooner	7	Kingston, 1820	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Hollis</i>	Schooner	35			Melzar Whitten
<i>Lark</i>	Schooner	43	Scituate		Peter Winsor, 1820
<i>King Solomon</i>	Schooner	61	Duxbury, 1817		Peter Winsor, 1820
<i>Fair Play</i>	Schooner	50	Kingston	Stephen Drew	Peter Winsor, 1820
<i>Packet</i>	Sloop	58	Duxbury, 1815		Richard Johnson, Seth Bartlett
<i>Massasoit</i>	Schooner	52			Peter Winsor, 1820
<i>Edward</i>	Schooner	38	Kingston, 1821	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Jones River Packet</i>	Sloop	45	Kingston, 1821	Lysander Bartlett	{ John Sever, Benjamin Delano, Melzar Whitten, James Sever, Jr. Joseph Holmes, George B. Holmes
<i>Industry</i>	Schooner	71	Kingston, 1821	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Nancy</i>	Schooner	26	Kingston, 1821	Peter Lanman, Jr.	Peter Lanman, Jr.
<i>Pilot</i>	Schooner	32	Westbrook, Me., 1820		Melzar Whitten, John Sever
<i>Columbus</i>	Ship	320	Kingston, 1821	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Kingston</i>	Ship	325	Kingston, 1822	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Five Brothers</i>	Schooner	71	Kingston, 1823	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes

## SHIPS OF KINGSTON

NAME OF VESSEL	TYPE	TONS	PLACE AND YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	OWNER
<i>King Solomon</i>	Schooner	83	Duxbury, 1823		Solomon Corey
<i>Horace</i>	Schooner	53	Kingston, 1822	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Manomet</i>	Schooner	42			Melzar Whitten, Philip Washburn
<i>Packet</i>	Sloop	58			Thomas C. Holmes, J. Bisbee
<i>Jones River Packet</i>	Sloop	45			
<i>North River Packet</i>					
<i>Hollis</i>	Schooner	46	Westbrook, Me.		Melzar Whitten
<i>Sophia &amp; Eliza</i>	Brig	206	Kingston, 1824	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph W. Plaskett, Nantucket, Joseph Holmes
<i>Leonidas</i>	Schooner	103	Kingston, 1824	Lysander Bartlett	Benjamin Delano
<i>Cornelius</i>	Schooner	22	Kingston, 1824	Richard Everson	Joseph Holmes
<i>Leonidas</i>	Brig	165	Kingston, 1824	Joseph Holmes	Wm. Lovering, Jr., Boston, Jos. Holmes
<i>Fair Play</i>	Schooner	62	Kingston, 1824	Stephen Drew	Peter Winsor
<i>Deborah</i>	Brig	144	Kingston, 1824	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Rambler</i>	Brig	187	Duxbury, 1824	Levi Sampson	Peter Winsor, Solomon Corey
<i>Sea Flower</i>	{ Pink Stern Schooner }	37	Essex, 1823		Peter Winsor, 1825
<i>Kingston</i>	Schooner	115	Kingston, 1825	Lysander Bartlett	{ John Sever, Benjamin Delano, Melzar Whitten, James Sever
<i>William Wallace</i>	Schooner	116	Kingston, 1825	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes
<i>Edward</i>	Brig	238	Kingston, 1825	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes
<i>Shawmut</i>	Brig	137	Kingston, 1826	Lysander Bartlett	{ Melzar Whitten, John Sever, Charles Sever
<i>Bruce</i>	Brig	147	Kingston, 1826	Lysander Bartlett	{ Melzar Whitten, John Sever, Charles Sever
<i>Eveline</i>	Schooner	71	Kingston, 1826	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Zanor</i>	Brig	248	Kingston, 1826	Stephen Drew	{ Benjamin Delano, Richard F. Johnson, Francis Johnson
<i>Canning</i>	Brig	182	Kingston, 1827	Lysander Bartlett	{ Melzar Whitten, John Sever, Charles Sever, Melzar Whitten, Jr.
<i>Dremon</i>	Brig	267	Kingston, 1827	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Fox</i>	Schooner	20	Plymouth, 1796		James Fuller, 1827
<i>Jay</i>	Pink Stern	20	Newburyport, 1815		Francis Washburn, 1827, Dan'l Adams
<i>Lexington</i>	Brig	197	Scituate, 1825		{ John Sever, James Sever, Melzar Whitten, Benj. Delano, <i>et al.</i>
<i>Galago</i>	Brig	160	Kingston, 1827	Joseph Holmes	
<i>Roxana</i>	Brig	137	Kingston, 1828	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes
<i>Undine</i>	Schooner	74	Kingston, 1828	Lysander Bartlett	Benj. Delano, James Allen, Harwich
<i>William Allen</i>	Schooner	86	Kingston, 1828	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, William Allen, John Allen, William Allen, Jr., Harwich
<i>Pamela</i>	Schooner	88	Kingston, 1828	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes
<i>March</i>	Schooner	90	Kingston, 1828	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Harriet</i>	Schooner	23	Kingston, 1829	Lysander Bartlett	{ Lysander Bartlett, Joseph Holmes, James H. Drew, Lysander Bartlett, Jr.
<i>Revolutioner</i>	Schooner	81	Kingston, 1829	Lysander Bartlett	Peter Winsor
<i>James</i>	Brig	169	Kingston, 1829	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever, Solomon Davie
<i>Helen Mar</i>	Ship	268	Kingston, 1829	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes
<i>February</i>	Schooner	86	Kingston, 1829	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes
<i>January</i>	Schooner	64	Kingston, 1829	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>April</i>	Schooner	64	Kingston, 1829	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Ohio</i>	Ship	300	Kingston, 1830	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Thetis</i>	Sloop	68	Killingsworth, Conn., 1829		William D. Winsor, 1830



## SHIPS OF KINGSTON

35

NAME OF VESSEL	TYPE	TONS	PLACE AND YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	OWNER
<i>Mercator</i>	Bark	200	Topsham, Me., 1822		{ Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, Edward Holmes, 1831
<i>Turbo</i>	Bark	294	Kingston, 1831	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, Henry Hall, Geo. T. Williams, Boston
<i>Sedum</i>	Schooner	82	Duxbury, 1831	Luther Turner	Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano
<i>Two Sisters</i>	Brig	222	Kingston, 1831	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Angeline</i>	Brig	195	Wells, Me., 1831		Benjamin Delano, Francis Johnson
<i>Baltimore</i>	Ship	299	Kingston, 1832	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever
<i>Alasco</i>	Bark	299	Kingston, 1832	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, Boston Parties
<i>William Tell</i>	Schooner	84	Essex, 1832		Peter Winsor
<i>Lookout</i>	Sloop	26	Montville, Conn., 1810		Francis Washburn, 1832, Mariner
<i>Mary Susan</i>	Schooner	54	Essex, 1832		Melzar Whitten
<i>Mariposa</i>	Ship	317	Kingston, 1833	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever
<i>Clio</i>	Schooner	79	Essex, 1833	Abel Storey	Peter Winsor, Albert Fuller
<i>Delos</i>	Schooner	69	Kingston, 1833	Lysander Bartlett	Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano
<i>Marine</i>	Brig	213	Kingston, 1833	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Juventer</i>	Sloop	58	Killingsworth, Conn., 1833		William D. Winsor, Peter Winsor
<i>Rialto</i>	Ship	459	Kingston, 1834	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, Paraclete Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Russell</i>	Ship	348	Kingston, 1834	Lysander Bartlett	{ John Sever, <i>et al.</i> , of Plymouth and Boston
<i>Volant</i>	Schooner	81	Kingston, 1834	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever, <i>et al.</i>
<i>Van</i>	Schooner	22	Duxbury, 1835		William H. Beaton, John Fearo, Jr.
<i>Winslow</i>	Schooner	71	Duxbury, 1833		James N. Sever
<i>December</i>	Schooner	55	Kingston, 1835	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Vesper</i>	Schooner	95	Essex, 1835	Abel Storey	Peter Winsor
<i>Cordova</i>	Schooner	93	Kingston, 1835	Lysander Bartlett	Benjamin Delano
<i>Fawn</i>	Schooner	96	Kingston, 1835	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever
<i>Hope</i>	Schooner	64	Kingston, 1835		Rufus Bradford
<i>Algerine</i>	Sloop	49	Kingston, 1835	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever, <i>et al.</i> , Delanos, 1836
<i>November</i>	Schooner	108	Kingston, 1836	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Charles</i>	Ship	387	Kingston, 1836	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever
<i>July</i>	Schooner	47	Kingston, 1836	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Exchange</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1836	Lysander Bartlett	Alonzo Schudder, Plymouth
<i>George Washington</i>	Schooner	40	Essex, 1836		Peter Winsor
<i>Engineer</i>	Schooner	76	Kingston, 1837	Lysander Bartlett	Lemuel Bradford, Plymouth
<i>August</i>	Schooner	116	Kingston, 1837	Joseph Holmes	{ Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes, Horace Holmes
<i>Caro</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1837	Lysander Bartlett	Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano
<i>September</i>	Schooner	115	Kingston, 1838	{ Joseph Holmes, Horace Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Nathaniel Burgess
<i>Eurotus</i>	Schooner	100	Kingston, 1838	Lysander Bartlett	Peter Winsor
<i>Red Rover</i>	Schooner	99	Pembroke, 1838	Luther Briggs	Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano
<i>Emerald</i>	Schooner	101	Kingston, 1838	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever
<i>Rowena</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1838	Lysander Bartlett	William D. Winsor
<i>Belize</i>	Brig	162	Kingston, 1838	{ Joseph Holmes, David Beal, Measurer	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Herculean</i>	Ship	542	Kingston, 1839	{ Joseph Holmes, Horace Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes
<i>Atlantic</i>	Schooner	103	Addison, Me., 1838		Thomas Bates, 1838

1993080

## SHIPS OF KINGSTON

NAME OF VESSEL	TYPE	TONS	PLACE AND YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	OWNER
<i>Charlotte</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1839	Lysander Bartlett	James N. Sever
<i>Navarro</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1839	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever
<i>Cohannet</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1839	{ Nathaniel D. Drew, Master Carpenter	Alexander Holmes
<i>John Drew</i>	Schooner	105	Kingston, 1840	{ Nathaniel D. Drew, Master Carpenter	Alexander Holmes
<i>Chattahoochee</i>	Schooner	115	Kingston, 1840	{ Nathaniel D. Drew, Master Carpenter	{ Alexander Holmes, Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano, Melzar Whitten, Ezekiel Doane
<i>Alesto</i>	Ship	420	Kingston, 1840	Lysander Bartlett	{ John Sever, James N. Sever, Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano, Melzar Whitten; Henry Whiting, Josiah Finney, W. S. Finney, Plymouth
<i>October</i>	Schooner	114	Kingston, 1840	Lysander Bartlett, Jr.	Joseph and Edward Holmes
<i>Leodes</i>	Ship	445	Kingston, 1841	Lysander Bartlett	John Sever
<i>June</i>	Schooner	88	Kingston, 1841	Nathaniel D. Drew	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Brazos</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1841	Nathaniel D. Drew	{ Alexander Holmes, Dawson Lincoln, Benjamin and Joshua Delano, Melzar Whitten
<i>Abeona</i>	Brig	119	Kingston, 1842	Nathaniel Bartlett	Alexander Holmes
<i>Rodney</i>	Brig	116	Kingston, 1842	Lysander Bartlett, Jr.	{ Lysander Bartlett, Jr., Lysander Bartlett, Henry Bartlett, Spencer Drew
<i>Raritan</i>	Ship	492	Kingston, 1843	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes Alexander Holmes
<i>Bridgewater</i>	Schooner	104	Kingston, 1844	Nathaniel D. Drew	Alexander Holmes
<i>Reindeer</i>	Brig	136	Kingston, 1844	Lysander Bartlett, Jr.	{ Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano, Elbridge G. Winsor
<i>May Bee</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1844	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>King Philip</i>	Schooner	97	Kingston, 1845	Lysander Bartlett, Jr.	Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano
<i>Troubadour</i>	Schooner	60	Brewer, Me., 1840		Francis Johnson
<i>Honest Tom</i>	Schooner	99	Kingston, 1845	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Gustavus</i>	Brig	145	Kingston, 1846	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Trueman</i>	Bark	229	Kingston, 1846	{ Nathaniel D. Drew, Master Carpenter	Alexander Holmes, Trueman Doane
<i>Edward Henry</i>	Brig	152	Kingston, 1847	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Risk</i>	Schooner	95	Kingston, 1847	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Omrah</i>	Schooner	92	Kingston, 1847	{ Nathaniel D. Drew, Master Carpenter	Alexander Holmes
<i>Monte Christo</i>	Brig	161	Kingston, 1847	Lysander Bartlett, Jr.	Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano
<i>Nathan Hannau</i>	Ship	513	Kingston, 1848	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	{ Joseph Holmes, Paraclete Holmes, William S. Adams, Edward Holmes, Horace Holmes
<i>Lysander</i>	Schooner	112	Kingston, 1848	Lysander Bartlett, Jr.	Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano
<i>Cosmos</i>	Schooner	110	Kingston, 1848	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Stafford</i>	Bark	205	Kingston, 1848	{ Nathan D. Drew, Master Carpenter	Alexander Holmes
<i>Ann &amp; Mary</i>	Bark	242	Kingston, 1849	{ Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes



## SHIPS OF KINGSTON

37

NAME OF VESSEL	TYPE	TONS	PLACE AND YEAR BUILT	BUILDER	OWNER
<i>Clark Winsor</i>	Schooner	124	Kingston, 1850	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Grey Hound</i>	Bark	265	Kingston, 1850		{ Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano, Elbridge G. Winsor
<i>Joseph Holmes</i>	Ship	611	Kingston, 1851	{ Edward Holmes Joseph Holmes	{ Jos. Holmes 8/16, Wm. S. Adams 4/16, Edward Holmes 2/16, Paraclete Holmes 1/16, Alexander Holmes 1/16
<i>Messenger Bird</i>	Bark	418	Kingston, 1852	{ Nathaniel Drew, Master Carpenter	{ Alexander Holmes 1/8, Trueman Doane 1/8, Orleans
<i>Ocean Bird</i>	Schooner	114	Kingston, 1852	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes
<i>White Wings</i>	Bark	293	Kingston, 1852	Lysander Bartlett, Jr.	{ Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano, Freeman Sherman, Henry Pigeons
<i>Fruiter</i>	Bark	290	Kingston, 1853	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	{ Joseph Holmes 6/8, Allen Dawes 1/8, Edward Holmes 1/8
<i>King Fisher</i>	Schooner	120	Kingston, 1853	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	Joseph Holmes
<i>Abby</i>	Bark	178	Kingston, 1854	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Frank Henry</i>	Brig	99	Kingston, 1854	Nathaniel D. Drew	Alexander Holmes
<i>Sicilian</i>	Bark	321	Kingston, 1855	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	{ Joseph Holmes 3/4, Edward Holmes 1/8, Allen Dawes 1/8
<i>Neapolitan</i>	Bark	320	Kingston, 1856	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Bird of the Wave</i>	Brig	178	Kingston, 1857	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Sentinel</i>	Boat	19			Harvey Ransom, 1858
<i>Egypt</i>	Bark	557	Kingston, 1860	{ Joseph Holmes Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter	{ Joseph Holmes 4/8, Alexander Holmes 1/8, Paraclete Holmes 1/8, Edward Holmes 1/8, William S. Adams 1/8
<i>Glance</i>	Schooner	46	Killingsworth, Me., 1823		Edward Holmes
<i>Fruiterer</i>	Bark	321	Kingston, 1861	{ Joseph Holmes Stephen Holmes, Measurer	Joseph Holmes, Edward Holmes
<i>Ellen</i>	Sloop	14			Francis Washburn, 1861
<i>Lemuel</i>	Bark	321	Kingston, 1863	Joseph Holmes	Joseph Holmes
<i>Anna Eldridge</i>	Schooner	139	Kingston, 1864	Edward Holmes	Edward Holmes
<i>Fisher</i>	Schooner	86	Kingston, 1865	Edward Holmes	Edward Holmes
<i>Young Teaser</i>	Schooner	126	Fairhaven, Mass., 1860		{ Levi Morton 2/16, Benjamin Delano 4/16, George T. Adams 2/16, E. G.W. Winsor 4/16, Joshua Delano 4/16
<i>Solomon</i>	Bark	600	Kingston, 1866	Edward Holmes	Edward Holmes
<i>Lucy Holmes</i>	Schooner	105	Kingston, 1867	Edward Holmes	Edward Holmes
<i>Rosewood</i>	Sloop		Kingston, 1868	Edward Holmes	Simon Burgess, Plymouth
<i>Hornet</i>	Bark	330	Kingston, 1868	Edward Holmes	Edward Holmes
<i>Mary Baker</i>	Schooner	101	Kingston, 1869	Edward Holmes	Edward Holmes
<i>Molly Porter</i>	Schooner	97	Duxbury, 1868	Keene & Shiverick	Joshua Delano, Joshua Delano, Jr.
<i>Helen A. Holmes</i>	Brig	316	Kingston, 1874	{ Edward Holmes Spencer Drew, Master Carpenter	Edward Holmes
<i>Hermes</i>	Schooner	12	Kingston, 1876	Nathan B. Watson	Marcus Winslow, Boston
<i>Siren</i>	Sloop	10			Lewis H. Keith, 1877
<i>Tiger</i>	Steamer	30	Kingston, 1898	Edward A. Ransom	{ Edward A. Ransom, A. J. Hill, C. A. Ransom, H. S. West



WILLIAM SEVER, ESQUIRE, 1760  
From a Portrait

#### WILLIAM SEVER

William Sever, or Squire Sever, as he was always called, was born in Kingston in 1729, and from the time of the first coming to Kingston of his father, Nicholas, in 1828, down to the death of Colonel John Sever, in 1855, this family has always played a most prominent part in business and affairs of the town.

With his father and brother he owned many vessels, and they are the first of which there is any actual record connecting them with this business in Kingston.

His picture is from a life-size oil portrait and was painted when he was in early middle life, and like many other portraits of old sea captains and ship owners it shows a vessel in the background.

He built the house on Linden Street now owned by Major George F. Sever about the time of his marriage in 1755, and died there in 1809.

#### BRIG OR BRIGANTINE *Independence* SIXTEEN GUNS

In a Naval History of the American Revolution by Allen, Vol. I, he says, "The Massachusetts navy began its existence in August, 1775, when the *Machias*, *Liberty* and *Diligent* were taken into the service of the Province. These vessels cruised for about a year with some success. A Commission appointed December 29, 1775, to consider the subject of a State Navy, ten vessels were authorized by the General Court of Massachusetts in February, 1776, the number being afterward reduced to five. April 20, 1776, it was resolved that the brigantine building at Kingston be called the *Independence*, and that the brigantine building at Dartmouth be called the *Rising Empire*; that the sloop at Salisbury be called the *Tyrannicide*; that one of the sloops building at Swanzy be called the *Republic* and the other the *Freedom*." From this it appears that the *Independence* is recorded as the first vessel authorized to be built by the State of Massachusetts for her State Navy.

"The first of the five vessels to get away to sea was the sloop *Tyrannicide* built at Salisbury. She carried 14 guns and 75 men and sailed July 17, 1776, in command of Captain John Fiske." Allen's history further says, "Meanwhile the brigantine *Independence*, Captain Simeon Sampson, whose instructions of July 26, 1776, were apparently the next issued after those of Captain Fiske, was directed immediately to proceed on a cruise not only against our Unnatural Enemies but also for ye Protection of the trade and you are directed to range the Coast of the Province of Maine and from thence proceed as far southward as Lat. 34° North and not further west than the Shoals of Nantucket, nor further east than the Island of Sable on the Coast of Nova Scotia." He also says, "The *Independence* accomplished little during the year and was captured by the enemy in the spring." As no date is given it must have been in 1777, for he says, that the Massachusetts brigs, *Tyrannicide*, *Captain Haraden* and *Hazard*, *Captain Sampson*, sailed late in 1777 on a cruise to the West Indies.

Thomas Bradford Drew in his History of Kingston for the History of Plymouth County, 1884, says of Simeon Sampson and brig *Independence*:

"This distinguished naval commander was a native of Kingston. He was appointed by the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, The first naval captain in the service and commanded the brig *Independence* and afterward the *Mars*, both vessels being built at Kingston



Landing. In 1776, he captured five prizes, but was himself soon after taken by Captain Dawson after a bloody conflict. He died June 22, 1789."

William T. Davis in his book entitled "Ancient Landmarks of Plymouth," speaks of Captain Simeon Sampson as being buried on Burial Hill, Plymouth, and that he received the first naval commission issued by the Provincial Congress and was placed in command of the brig *Independence*, built at Kingston, the first vessel that was placed in commission. He made many successful cruises in the *Independence*, *Hazard* and *Warren*, winning as many victories as he fought battles, until after one of the most bloody contests of the war, he was captured by Captain Dawson and held a prisoner in Fort Cumberland, near Halifax, until released by exchange. The sword worn by him in his various battles and returned to him on his surrender by Captain Dawson in recognition of his gallantry, is in Pilgrim Hall, a fitting companion to the blade of Myles Standish, whose granddaughter he had married.

An old account book belonging to William Sever of Kingston, records that he was the Agent for the Provincial Government of Massachusetts, or as he sometimes writes it, State of Mass. Bay, in the building at Kingston, Mass., in 1776 of the brig *Independence* as under the date of November 22, that year, the following entry is found in his journal: "Mass. State for brig *Independence*, Dr. to William Drew, his bill for building 488 pounds." There are many other charges in the journal to the State on the brig's account, and the last one is dated "Kingston, Feb. 1777. Mass. State for brig *Independence*. To cash paid Daniel Adams for expenses in recruiting 3 pounds 7 shillings, 9 pence." From these and other charges it is shown that William Sever was the State Agent until the brig was ready for sea with crew on board.

In the Kingston Public Library are a number of pamphlets and historical papers about the town that were written by Mr. Cornelius A. Bartlett of Kingston many years ago. He was a ship carpenter and worked in the various shipyards on Jones River from about 1830 to 1865. He married a sister of John N. Drew, a descendant of Samuel Drew, who was a shipwright, or as later called, a ship carpenter, and the first Drew to settle in Kingston in 1713. Among his papers in the Library is a history of the Drew family. In it he says the shipyard where he and his sons built was in the valley near the line of the Alms House lot, launching many vessels across the river. His sons and grandsons were also shipwrights using this same yard. Mr. Bartlett also says that the grandsons of Samuel Drew built the brig *Independence*, 16 guns, and the ship *Mars*, 20 guns, for the Provincial Government of Massachusetts. John Drew, a great-great-grandson of Samuel, told him they were built near where the Alms House now stands, having been told so by men who worked on them when they were building.

It would be very interesting if a complete account could be given here of the cruises made by this vessel during the short time she was in the service of the State and how her captors finally disposed of her.

Kingston people always spoke of the *Independence* as a brig, but by Allen's history calling her a brigantine, she may have been so listed on State Records. These two rigs, brig and brigantine, have always been confused and continued to be so as long as two-masted vessels with yards and square sails on one or both masts were built. In all probability these first naval records of the State were not accurately kept for Allen's History calls the *Tyrannicide* a sloop when building, and later reports her as a brig in command of Captain Haraden, sailing late in the fall of 1777 on a cruise to the West Indies in company with the brig, *Hazard*, Captain Sampson.

#### THE LIVERPOOL PITCHER

These pitchers were called Liverpool pitchers because it was very common in the early part of the nineteenth century whenever a vessel went to Liverpool, for the master either for himself or owner to have a picture of his ship painted on a pitcher of Staffordshire ware.

This pitcher, whose picture is shown, belongs to Alexander Holmes of Kingston and has been in his family since brought from England by Captain Seth Johnson of the brig *Two Pollys* on her first voyage in 1801.

The following story of the brig illustrates how an account of a voyage of one of Joseph Holmes' vessels was found.

The brig *Two Pollys*, 250 tons, was built by Joseph Holmes at Bridgewater in 1801. Mr. Holmes says in a letter, that he went to Bridgewater, May 27, 1801, engaged plan of Zeph. Shaw and timber, 10 tons at \$4.00 per ton from Johnathan Leonard. He built the brigs *Two Pollys*, *Algol* and *Lucy*, noted for taking first cargo of ice, the schooner *Alexander* and brig *Trident* in Bridgewater. *Trident* was used to move his materials to Kingston in 1806.

There is no record in the Plymouth Custom House of the *Two Pollys*, *Algol* and *Lucy* and as they were brought down the Taunton River, they must have been registered at Dighton or Boston, where they were partly owned. The schooner *Alexander* and brig *Trident* were the last vessels Joseph Holmes built on the Taunton River in what he called his Bridgewater shipyard, coming to Kingston as soon as launched, where some final work was done on them, as shown, by old bills, in the building yard he had acquired of Stephen Drew at the Landing, Jones River, and they are registered at the Plymouth Custom House.

The brig *Algol's* rig was changed to that of a ship the work being done at Kingston and she was then registered at the Plymouth Custom House as a ship in 1807.

Joseph Holmes, or as he then signed his name, Joseph Holmes, Jr., soon disposed of his interests in these early vessels, as he was then more of a builder than owner, and we know little of them but their names.

The following item taken from Notes and Queries in the Boston Saturday Evening Transcript for August 3, 1912, shows that the brig, *Two Pollys'* first voyage was to England and reads thus: "Sometime ago an inquiry appeared asking for data as to time required to cross the Atlantic in the 1800 to 1850 period. At that time my attest copy of the old Marland Family Bible was loaned. Today it is returned and it seems authentic enough to copy the following: "Memorandum from the family Bible of Abraham Mar-



LIVERPOOL PITCHER OF STAFFORDSHIRE WARE. BRIG *Two Pollys*, SETH JOHNSON, MASTER, 1801

land (born 1772, died 1849) of Andover, Mass. an early and successful manufacturer of woollen goods at Andover. The within named Abraham and Mary Marland left England in brig *Two Polly* Capt. Seth Johnson, on the 9th day of August 1801, together with William Sykes, brother of Mrs. Marland and arrived in Boston in the U. S. on the 17th of September following. I should be interested to learn of longer voyages than thirty nine days in the early part of the last century. Signed S. J. M.

In reply to the above, it may be said that this was not a bad passage for a small vessel bound west, for in 1846, the ship *Herculean*, owned by Joseph Holmes and called by her captain very fast, besides being much larger than this little brig, was 55 days from Havre to New York.

#### JOSEPH HOLMES

Joseph Holmes, the son of Joseph, was born on his father's farm in Kingston in 1772. The farm, called Egypt, was situated in the north-west part of the town. The reason for so naming



being given in the Remarks on bark *Egypt* of Kingston.

Always of a studious and deeply religious mind he entered the College of Rhode Island in Providence, now Brown University, and on graduating in 1797 became a minister, taking charge of a parish on the Cape. A dislike for the parish or finding himself unfitted for this work caused him to give up the ministry and in 1801 he leased a shipyard on the Taunton River near Pratt's Bridge in Bridgewater for the building of vessels. Here he remained until 1806 when he removed to the Kingston Landing and continued building vessels up to the time of his death, in 1863. Mr. Holmes was a man of large frame, well over six feet in height, and their ancestry can easily be traced in his descendants today.

He lived in the large, square house on the corner of Main and Elm Streets, or the Mill Road, as it was once called, near the Meeting House of the First Congregational Parish. This house was built by his brother Lemuel, in 1797,

and bought by him in 1805. It faces to the east and the room to the right of the front door on the northeast corner was unfinished and used for a store. His office was in a small room on the westerly end of this store with an outlook onto the Main Street. Here he transacted all of his business, consulted with his captains as to their voyages, and carried on his correspondence with bankers, merchants, and those in charge of his vessels at home and abroad.

The account of the seizure of his ship *Lucy*, in 1807, shows the danger of loss he and other ship-owners were exposed to when sending vessels to England or European ports during the Napoleonic wars.

The ship *Lucy* of Kingston, 208 tons, was launched in 1806. This ship was named *Lucy* for the wife of Joseph Holmes, Jr., and was the first ship owned by him. She was built for him by Lysander Bartlett, Sr., master carpenter in the Bartlett Yard above the railroad bridge where the boatshop of the heirs of Captain E. A. Ransom now stands. She cost \$7,366, ready for sea, Joseph Holmes, Jr., owning one-half, Jediaiah Holmes one-quarter, and Jesse Inglee, who was master, one-quarter. This was the first vessel built by Joseph Holmes, in Kingston, the previous ones being built in Bridgewater, in what he called his Bridgewater Ship Yard and taken down the Taunton River, though hailing from Kingston.

Very little can be told about this ship, and what I know of her voyages was found in a few old bills, letters, protests, etc. She left Kingston in May, 1806, bound for Boston, Inglee, master, and Captain Peter Winsor was paid \$10 for piloting her to Boston, and the same month he was paid \$1 for piloting brig *Trident* down the river, and in July was paid \$2 for piloting brig *Brunette* down the river. At that time, Joseph Holmes had these vessels employed, besides schooner *Alexander* and brig *Algol*, the others he had built appearing to have been sold. The first voyage of this ship was from Boston to Charleston, S. C., in ballast, loading cotton there for Liverpool, where she was in September, 1806, on for Boston, loaded with coal, salt, crated goods and passengers. October 27, 1806, she arrived in Boston and entered protest that date, having had bad weather on the passage. Protest read as follows: "That she sailed from Liverpool, September 4, 1806, bound to Boston, with dry goods, tight and strong and well equipped and manned for the voyage,



JOSEPH HOLMES

that on September 14, 1806, Latitude  $59^{\circ} 17'$  North and Longitude  $20^{\circ} 10'$  West from London, experienced a sudden change of wind from southwest to north, obliging all sail to be furled, except foresail, wind blowing very hard and ship leaking considerably and from the 14th to the 22d, weather and wind was variable with hard gales in which the ship was kept close reefed the greater part of the time and sometimes only foresail set, the ship making considerable water, and on the 29th experienced a heavy gale of wind, continuing two succeeding days, with heavy rains, and at times a very bad sea, by which ship labored and strained and leaked much. After this had variable weather, mostly strong gales till October 25th when the ship arrived at Boston." This protest was signed by Captain Inglee, Bartlett Holmes, 2d mate, and Benjamin Coffin, seaman.

This Bartlett was Joseph Holmes' brother-in-law, and with Captain Inglee, was in the ship till she was seized by the French and condemned.

The vessel received \$2,070.22 for this first voyage, and after being repaired in Boston, she sailed from there December 18, 1806, for Charleston, S. C., loading there the last of January, 1807, for Liverpool with cotton and staves. Being in Liverpool the last of March, 1807, she loaded there with coal, salt, crated goods and passengers for Boston, arriving there June 2, 1807, this being her second voyage.

Her accounts show that \$201.27 was secured from passengers brought from Liverpool to Boston and \$641.50 freight money on cargo. Having secured a freight from New York to London she proceeded to New York and loaded staves, Jesse Inglee, master, and Bartlett Holmes, 2d mate. In London a cargo of sugar was taken for Hamburg, where she was seized and condemned by the French authorities for smuggling, her papers not being correct. From what is known of the affair it appears that the captain was not honest in his settlements with the other owners of the ship, as on the passage to London a quantity of cotton in bales was picked up at sea and sold there by him for much more than appeared in his ship's account, the captain calling the cotton of the most inferior quality and claiming to have sold it for such, when it was afterward proved by the 2d mate, Holmes, to have been of, and to have sold for, the best quality. It also appears that after the ship arrived at Hamburg, some of her freight was sold, Inglee receiving the money, and he had \$400 that he was unable to account for in his settlement with the owners, and had no funds of his own on leaving New York.

Helbers, James & Co. chartered the *Lucy* for the Hamburg voyage and under date of August, 1809, wrote in answer to Mr. Holmes' letter inquiring as to the seizure that the ship was entered out and bound for Tonningen to get a set of real papers which they had been promised, and then to proceed to Hamburg, having also American simulated papers to serve in case of need. She did not go to Tonningen on account of a gale or was warned off, they did not know which, as they never had any further word of her. She was condemned in consequence of a French Customs Officer introducing himself as an American sailor and then getting at the secret of her having loaded in England. They received \$30,000 insurance on cargo on account of her being condemned. The American owners of the ship were insured, but were unable to collect, as was the case of two other American ships who made the same voyage and were condemned at that time.

This act of the captain in making this voyage, which seems in every way illegal, and the consequent loss of the ship, caused Joseph Holmes great financial embarrassment, which was also increased by the United States Embargo Act, as is shown by his letters of these years. The ship, at time of seizure, was almost new, this being her third voyage, and as he had only been in the business of building and owning vessels a few years, it was a number of years before he recovered from these losses and became the large and successful ship-owner of his later years.

In connection with her capture we find from a copy of a memorial for a claim for damages to the United States Commissioners appointed by the United States Government to settle claims for American vessels seized and condemned by the French Government about 1806 and 1807 and since called "French Spoliation Claims," dated August 6, 1833, and



signed by Joseph Holmes and Jedediah Holmes, both of Kingston, Mass., that they then in 1806 and 1807 owned the ship *Lucy* of Kingston, Mass., of 253 82/95 tons, together with Jesse Inglee of Kingston, master of said ship and the memorial reads in part as follows as to her loss:

That the said ship *Lucy* was employed by your memorialists in the business of freighting. That the said ship being arrived in the port of London from New York, did discharge the said cargo in London, take on board in the month of Oct. 1807 as freight, a full cargo of coffee and sugar for Tonnigen and proceeded accordingly from the said port of London toward the said port of Tonnigen and arrived off the island of Heligoland and came to anchor. When the said ship *Lucy* encountered a long continued

and heavy gale of wind lasting for several days, that the wind shifting to a quarter that prevented the anchors from holding the officers and crew of said ship, judged it prudent to get the ship under sail, cut the cables and made for the opposite port of Crushaven when upon arrival or soon after, the said ship and cargo, was seized and sequestered by the French Government Custom House officers from Hamburg and by them confiscated and condemned.

The value of this ship was \$12,000 and cargo \$10,000, but the United States Government never allowed the owners' claims.

During the years 1805, 1806 and 1807, Joseph Holmes was building in Kingston and Bridgewater, for the schooner *Alexander*, the last vessel he built in Bridgewater, cleared from Dighton on the Taunton River for Boston, May 28, 1807, and he had already completed and launched the brig *Brunette* in 1806 from the yard at the Landing which he had lately acquired from Stephen Drew.

Among Joseph Holmes' papers as to ship *Lucy* is a bill from Lysander Bartlett of Kingston, a copy of which follows and shows the date of his final work on ship *Lucy* in the Bartlett yard.

Joseph Holmes, Jr., to Lysander Bartlett, *Dr.* April 6th, 1806

	D.	cts.
To use of the yard for building of your ship . . . . .	10''	00
To 74 days work at 6/ per day . . . . .	74''	00
To days work on your rudder at 9/ per day . . . . .	3''	00
April 19th,		
To Graving your ship . . . . .	12''	00
	100.	00
May 10th		
To 1/2 days work Uncle Abijah, graving . . . . .	1''	00

*Received Payment,*

LYSANDER BARTLETT.

Another bill among the ship's papers is from a carver of figureheads in Boston and reads:

Boston, April 26, 1806.

Mr. Joseph Holmes to Saml. Skillin. *Dr.*

	D.	cts.	m
To Carving six & half feet womans head for ship <i>Lucy</i>			
with brackets & trailboards . . . . .	45''	50''	0
To Priming & carting . . . . .	2''	00''	0
	47''	50''	0

*Receivd Pay.*

SAML. SKILLIN.

The carving done by Skillin must have been a six and one-half foot figurehead, or, as sometimes called, a head, of a woman's figure, representing Joseph Holmes' wife Lucy, for whom the vessel was named. Previous to this period and for many years after, it was the fashion for vessels to carry on their bows a large and elaborately carved figure, often of a man or a woman, which would now be considered out of all proportion to the size of the vessel.

Later, these figureheads were made much smaller, adding to the vessel's looks and also



ELISHA TURNER HOLMES  
From a Miniature

safety by the less weight hanging on the stem. On the *Herculean*, as will appear in the story of this vessel, a figure of a man about seven feet tall supposed to represent Hercules was carried for a figurehead. It was about the size of that on the *Lucy*, and although this ship was much larger than the *Lucy* it gives a ship a very heavy appearance forward as can be seen in the painting of her. It had to be removed on account of its weight. About 1859 and after, the style of ornamenting the bows of a vessel changed. If a full-length figure was used it was made much smaller and often only a head and bust was carried. In many cases a small piece of planking or timber was fashioned with graceful curves and scrollwork on the forward end and sides, into an ornament called a billet or fiddle-head. This was fitted to the vessel's stem under the bowsprit and the customs records were very particular in their description of a vessel registered as to whether she was distinguished by a figure or a billet-head. Today,

regardless of the shape or size, it is customary to call all these ornaments figureheads and sometimes none were carried, which gave to the vessel a very unfinished look forward.

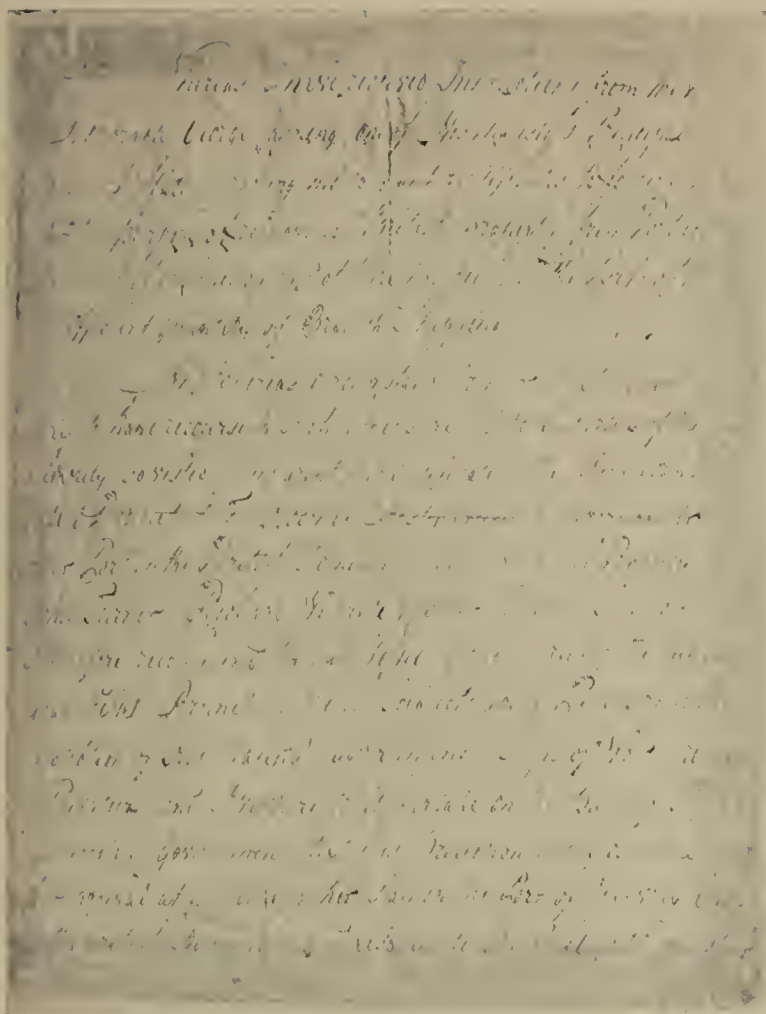
INVENTORY. SHIP *Lucy*. 12 MONTHS OLD JUNE 1807

Mast, yards and Booms Complete

SAILS

Four Top Sails	One Main Stay Sail	One Jib
One Main Sail	Two Top Gallant do-do-do	One Main Top Mast Stay Sail
Two Royals	One Fore Sail	One Mizzen Stay Sail
One Spanker	Three Top Gallant Sails	Two Top Mast Studding Sails
One Fore Top Mast Stay Sail	One Mizzen	One Lower do-do-do
One Middle Top Mast Stay Sail		
Two Bower Anchors	One Per Grains	One Crobar
One Kedge	One Stream Anchor	One Spare Top Mast
One Stream Cable	Two Bower Cables	One Spare Top Sail Yard
One Camboose & House	One Hawser	One Shovel
One Hand Lead & Line	One Deep Sea Lead & Line	One Tea Kettle
One Half Hour Glass	One Log Reel & Line	One Sauce Pan
Ten Water Casks	Two Second Glasses	One Pendant
Three Marling Spikes	Nine Hand Spikes	One Coffee Mill
One Runner & Tackle	One Long Boat & 4 Oars	Three Serving Mallets
Two Cat Blocks	Three Burton Blocks	A Quantity of Bolts, Spikes & Nails
Hatch Bars Locks & Keys	One Fish Hook	Two Spare Top Gall Masts
Three Setts Pump Gear	Two Lanthorns	One Grind Stone
Two Hammers	Two Scrubbing Brushes	One Frying Pan
One Ships Axe	One Cooks Axe	One Ensign
Four Paint Brushes	Three Scrapers	Three Covered Buckets
Two Draw Buckets	Six Paint Pots & Bucket	Two Mops
One Pair Can Hooks	One Pair Hnd. Slings	A Quantity Blocks, Sheaves and Pins
Four Chairs	One Boat Hook	One Brush
One Dozen Plates	One Side Ladder	Two Tea Cannisters
One Case Knives & Forks	Two Wood Compasses	One Looking Glass
One Tea Pot	One Hand Trumpet	Six Cups & Saucers
One Turene	A Quantity Spare Hooks & Thimbles	Six Tea Spoons
Six Wine Glasses	One Table	One Pr. Man Ropes
Two Table Cloths	Two Dishes	One Brass Compass
One Cabin Bell	Two Pitchers	One Speaking Trumpet
One Castor	One Coffee Pot	One Medicine Chest
Four Table Spoons	Four Small Mugs	





voyages in her. This is the first record of a vessel built by Joseph Holmes in his building yard at the Kingston Landing. She was launched in 1806. December 9, 1807, the brig was at Liverpool from Lisbon, being repaired, and sailed for Boston in February, 1808, Elisha T. Holmes of Kingston, master. December 1, 1808, the vessel was again at Liverpool from Lisbon, bound for Boston, captain, E. T. Holmes, and as no further accounts appear of the brig among Joseph Holmes' papers she was probably sold on arrival. A number of years later, June, 1830, one of Joseph Holmes' captains wrote him that the brig *Brunette* was at Ponce, P. R., from New York, loaded with fish, 31 days' passage.

The following is a copy of the Protection paper given to Captain Elisha Turner Holmes, master of the brig *Brunette* of Kingston by the representative of the English Government at Lisbon for a voyage from Lisbon to Liverpool, October 16, 1807. This passage of the brig from Lisbon to Liverpool was made on her first voyage. At this time England was at war with France and all French ports were in a state of blockade by the English fleets. The Protection given Captain Holmes was

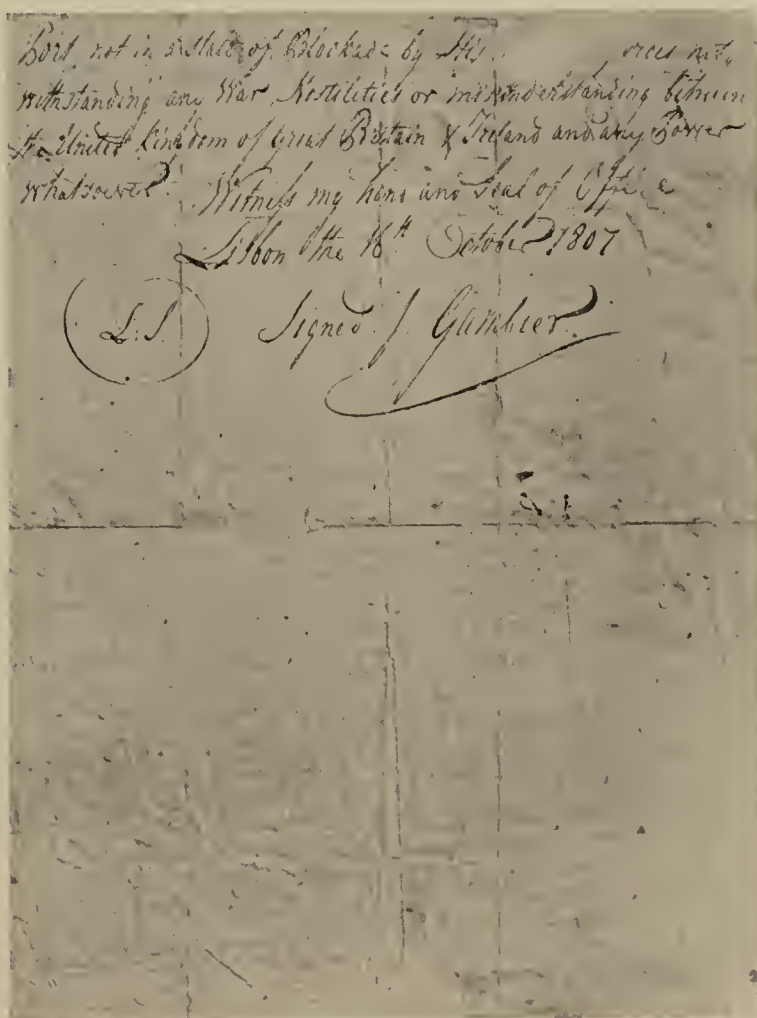
This inventory does not mention a number of articles that must have been on board, but gives a very good idea of what was required for a ship's use that was engaged in foreign trade at this time. As in the later vessels, passengers were usually carried on the return voyage from England and the Continent to this country, but no life-rafts, life-preservers or extra boats were provided, and in case of disaster at sea there was little chance to save life, which offers a striking contrast to the safety devices employed on the passenger steamships of today.

#### CAPTAIN ELISHA TURNER HOLMES

He was a brother-in-law of Joseph Holmes and born in North West Kingston near Silver Lake, in 1778, being one of ten brothers.

A genealogical sketch of the Holmes family in "The Giles Memorial" speaks of him as the first to carry the Stars and Stripes into the Black Sea.

He commanded the brig *Brunette* of Kingston, 180 tons, when new, making several



PROTECTION OF BRIG *Brunette* OF KINGSTON, 1807  
ELISHA TURNER HOLMES, MASTER



BARQUE *Turbo* OF BOSTON, HENRY L. ADAMS, MASTER. SAILING OUT OF THE PORT OF CORK, MARCH 6TH, A.D. 1833



a very important paper as it would save him from unnecessary delay if overhauled by English cruisers on the high seas. The Protection reads:

Whereas, I have received Instructions from the Right Honorable George Canning, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, Directing me to grant certificates to foreign Vessels for the purpose of removing British property from Portugal, in the event of emergency and of there not being in the Ports of Portugal a sufficient quantity of British Shipping.

And Whereas, circumstances render it, at present, necessary to have recourse to such a measure, I do by virtue of the said authority so vested in me grant this certificate to the American Vessel called *Brunet*. E. T. Holmes, Master, bound for Liverpool or any other Port in the British Dominions, laden with the Property of John Turner, Richard Witherell and other British subjects, and I therefore recommend the said Vessel, cargo and crew of the said American Vessel, *Brunet* and British Subjects going Passengers to the protection of His Majesty's Government, Ships of War, Cruisers and Privateers, and I venture to undertake on the part of His Majesty's Government that this protection shall continue until her arrival at and during her stay in the Port of delivery being in the British Dominions and also until she shall go to some other Port not in a state of Blockade by His Majesty's forces notwithstanding any War, Hostilities or misunderstanding between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and any Power whatsoever. Witness my hand and Seal of Office.

Lisbon the 16th October 1807,

Signed, J. GAMBIER.



CAPTAIN HENRY L. ADAMS

There is nothing to show that he ever went in any other Kingston vessel. He married a Charlestown woman and for a number of years made his home there while sailing out of Boston. On giving up the sea he returned to Kingston and died there in 1860.

His picture is from a miniature that was painted abroad, probably at the time of his marriage and is beautifully done. It is now owned by Alexander Holmes of Kingston.

#### BARK *Turbo*

Bark *Turbo* of Kingston, 294 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes in 1831; owned by Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, Henry Hall and George T. Williams, Boston.

#### REMARKS

When this bark left Kingston for Boston, new, Edward Holmes was in command. He did not go in her from Boston and very little is known about this vessel. From a picture of this bark, owned by Dr. Arthur B. Holmes of Kingston, it is shown that she was in Cork, Ireland, March 6, 1833, commanded by Captain Henry L. Adams, who had previously served as mate.

January 20, 1834, she was at Charleston, S. C., in command of Captain Melzar Whitten, loading rice and cotton for Antwerp, and later at Boston, Joshua Delano, mate.

January 29, 1835, she was again at Charleston, in command of a Captain Washburn who took



BENJAMIN DELANO





JOSHUA DELANO

Upon retiring from the sea, about 1845, he was engaged for a number of years in a commission business of freighting vessels at Wilmington, N. C., and afterward carried on a lumber business in Havana, Cuba.

He died at Kingston, September 11, 1888.

#### BENJAMIN DELANO

Benjamin Delano was born in Kingston, dying here in 1868, eighty-nine years old.

The Records in the Plymouth Custom House give him and Peter Winsor the ownership of the sloop *Two Sisters*, 44 tons, in 1803. From the time his son Joshua was old enough to become his partner he seldom owned a vessel alone, and whenever a Delano vessel was mentioned it was always considered as belonging to both, so closely were they associated in business.

Custom House books did not always give the names of all of a vessel's owners, after her first registration, and if owned in a family the real ones can only be found by a careful search through old letters and journals, and a vessel registered to the father alone might also be owned in by a son.

He lived in Rocky Nook, Kingston, on the old Boston road, near Smelt Brook and not far from his Rocky Nook wharves, and his house is now owned by his granddaughter, Mrs. Marcia D. Demmon of Boston.

#### JOSHUA DELANO

Joshua Delano, a son of Benjamin Delano, was born at Rocky Nook, Kingston, in 1809, and when a young man sailed in his father's vessels for several years. In 1831 his name is on record as owning with his father the schooner *Sedum* of Kingston, and from this time until the selling of the last vessel, about 1882, he was a large owner in the shipping of Kingston.

Like Joseph Holmes, when the Delanos owned a vessel with others their interests were usually controlling ones, which allowed them to be the managing owners. For many years more sea captains lived in Rocky Nook than in any other part of the town, almost every house being owned by one of them, and many going in the Delano vessels as long as they followed the sea.

In 1831, Benjamin Delano owned, with his son, Joshua, and Captain Francis Johnson of Kingston, the brig *Angeline*, 195 tons.

Captain Whitten's place, the ship *Rialto* being there at the same time.

September 26, 1839, she was at Boston with coal and iron from England, 45 days' passage, and on December 16, again at Boston with coal.

December 31, 1839, Alexander Holmes writes his father, Joseph Holmes, that he thinks of sending the *Turbo* south in ballast to Savannah or Mobile. As nothing more can be found about this vessel she was probably sold about this time; two Boston merchants owning her with Joseph and Alexander Holmes.

#### CAPTAIN HENRY L. ADAMS

He was a younger brother of Captain William S. Adams, and was born in Kingston in 1810. He commenced going to sea when a boy and most of his voyages were made in Boston vessels. The only Kingston vessel he commanded was the bark *Turbo*, owned by Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes and Boston parties.



This brig was built at Wells, Maine, and her Captain, Francis Johnson, superintended her construction. Valued at \$9,000 when ready for sea. Carried a crew of six men. Captain Johnson continued to be master of her for several years and the following is an account of some of her earlier voyages. Her first voyage was from Boston to Smyrna and return in 1831 and 1832, arriving in Boston, January 19, 1832. The following is from a letter that Captain Johnson wrote to Mr. Delano from Boston Quarantine, dated January 19, 1832, as to the homeward passage:

Arrived at last without losing a hair of my head, thank God. Left Smyrna, Oct. 16th, 1831, full of plague and cholera morbus, dying at the rate of 500 per day. Passed the Rock (Gibraltar) the 34th day. Off the Western Islands met the westerly gales, when we lay to 10 days to commence with. Such weather as the month of December I have never seen. My whole passage nothing but westerly winds. Still I think myself fortunate for there has not been a day since I left but the brig has been in condition to make most of every slant of wind. The brig possesses every quality we can expect or wish. She has not met with the slightest damage. I have seen one vessel under jury-

masts and fell in with one without any masts and full of water, out of which I took nine men badly frozen and almost exhausted. Were reduced to one gallon of water. Had been exposed to the weather twenty-four days. The mate, poor fellow, with both feet frozen and the lock-jaw. He was soon relieved by the happy stroke of death. The rest of them are doing well. I have met with pleasant weather on the coast. I think it damned hard after being at sea three months to be quarantined, when I have not a man on board who has not eaten his two pounds of beef per day since leaving Smyrna. Whether I have got to lay here one month or two is more than I know. Shall I ever finish this voyage, my patience is threadbare.

In June, the vessel was at St. Petersburg for Boston and November 16, 1833 at New York chartered for Savannah, and from there to Nantes, Rochelle and Philadelphia and returned to New York. Cargo from Savannah, cotton and flour. Amount of charter \$1,500, which Captain Johnson considers very good. Captain Johnson wrote Mr. Delano from Brest where he was anchored on account of bad weather, as to the voyage from Savannah, and the letter tells of the hardships the officers and crews underwent at that time on winter passages in these small vessels. The letter is given here:

The *Angeline* is safe.

Brest, Jan. 22, 1834.

Dear Sir: I have made my passage by scudding and lying to. The heaviest passage that I ever made. Last Friday, blowing a gale of wind discovered myself in the bay of Brest.

About one P.M. put the brig under double reefed topsail and wore ship every two hours through the night with sea enough to bury her up. This was the most dangerous night I ever spent. At daylight was to the leeward of Brest Harbor, blowing too heavy to expect any assistance from shore.

I will now give you the situation of my crew who were fatigued out for the want of dry clothes and proper provisions. I have got a good crew and ten days out took them into the cabin and this would not always shelter them from water. Twice on the passage my cabin was filled half full of water. For ten days not a day for drying clothes and for five days at a time not so much as a cup of hot coffee could be obtained. The mate had a felon on his finger. The captain good for nothing and the crew were filled with salt water boils and their feet too much swelled to wear shoes or boots. Nothing but the safety of their lives kept them moving this awful night. In this situation the one chance was to make a harbor by the chart. About ten o'clock squared away, run up the bay about fifteen miles and came to anchor about three P.M. in a fine harbor with a westerly wind. At ten that night, calm. Sunday, blew strong from the west, saw the men on shore, but none came off. At night blowing a gale from the northwest, the brig in a good harbor. Monday, a fine day for drying clothes which we stand so much in

need. On Tuesday, got a pilot and anchored at Brest.

It was now blowing heavy from the southwest, the brig lying with both anchors ahead. The brig is quarantined for nine days. The brig has sustained by little damage considering the heavy gales we have passed through.

About Christmas, we had a heavy gale from the west lasting three days and before January 1st, another from the northeast, it commenced with a heavy tempest and for two hours I never saw it blow so heavy. Nothing but gales during the passage. Our damage is, both monkey rails stove in and a part of the bulwarks, lost both swinging booms, broke one top mast, stove the boat, cabin house and caboose, almost everything washed off decks except boat and water. Lost one jib and about one half the fore spencer. The rigging has suffered very much. It is all broke to pieces and washed to the devil. I pity any poor devil that is caught in the Atlantic in an old vessel.

The *Angeline* stands heavy weather remarkably well. She made some water during the gale which appears to be above water and no doubt some of the cargo is damaged, a deal of water has gone down through the cabin floor.

I have got on a dry shirt, dry stockings and dry breeches, sitting down by a fine little stove smoking a cigar, almost taking comfort, already to try it again. A few days' rest and dry weather has revived my crew much, they are all doing well.

I have just seen the Consul. He says the losses on this coast are immense, one ship of 800 tons lost about ten miles from where I anchored, all hands lost. Thus far, I have no reason to complain but thank God it was no worse.

Signed, FRANCIS JOHNSON.



*Biallo, entering the Port of Marseilles in 1838.*



He lived in a house beside his father's and after he had disposed of his vessels occupied himself with the care of his farm, inherited from his father, adjoining the Rocky Nook Wharves, up to the time of his death, in 1903.

### SHIP *Rialto*

Ship *Rialto* of Kingston, 459 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes, in 1834; owned by Joseph Holmes, Alexander Holmes, Paraclete Holmes and Edward Holmes.

### REMARKS

The history of this ship *Rialto* as far as is known, is as follows:

She was built in Joseph Holmes' shipyard at the Landing, Jones River, in 1834, and up to that time was the largest vessel ever built in Kingston. Her tonnage was 459 tons and her dimensions were 124 feet long, 28 feet 7 inches wide, and 14 feet 3½ inches deep. She was valued at \$25,000 as she sailed from the Cow Yard, Plymouth harbor, ready for sea.

Cornelius Bartlett, a ship carpenter of Kingston, and who worked on her when building, says in his diary as follows: "Mar. 24, 1834. The ship *Rialto* was launched from Mr. Joseph Holmes' shipyard. A very successful launch. Mar. 27th, she was taken down the river. Stopping on the point of the Nook. The tides fell off and she remained there till they came up. While there she was mostly rigged. From there she was taken to Rocky Nook Wharf. Finished rigging, took in ballast, etc., and sailed for Boston. Stopped in the Cow Yard a few days to take in a little more ballast, then went to Boston. Arrived, Apr. 29, 1834.

"On May 9th, she sailed from Boston bound to Savannah, Captain Perez H. Sampson, master; Mr. Edward Holmes, mate. Arriving at Savannah, May 18, 1834. Nine days from Boston after a very boisterous passage."

In January, 1835, the *Rialto* was at Charleston, S. C., Captain Paraclete Holmes, master; Edward Holmes, mate, and sailed for Liverpool with cotton. July 20, 1835, she was at Liverpool ready for sea, bound for Boston with a small cargo, consisting of 160 tons of salt, 100 tons of C. coal and 100 pounds in sovereigns, balance of freight money. Mr. Edward Holmes in a letter to his father, Joseph Holmes, dated Liverpool, July 19, 1835, says, he expects a 40 days passage.

In 1842 she arrived in Boston, after a long passage from Liverpool not paying expenses and damaging some cargo.

January 20, 1843, she sailed from Boston in ballast bound to Mobile, Captain W. S. Adams of Kingston, master, and on the passage in a heavy gale of wind, the ship was hove down and they cut away the mizzenmast to make her keep off and so lost it with all rigging and sails attached, and on account of this disaster went to New Orleans to repair. She then loaded cotton for Europe and returned July 27, 1844. Mr. Joseph Holmes says he has some prospects of selling the *Rialto* but if not sold shall take her to Kingston and give her a thorough repairing. She was not sold: repaired at Rocky Nook Wharf and was continued in the cotton and tobacco trade under Captains Adams, Chase and Hansen.

A letter from Joseph Holmes, dated July 27, 1844, to his son, Captain Paraclete Holmes at London in the ship *Herculean*, after acknowledging receiving a letter from the captain concerning a freight he had accepted from New York, amounting to the sum of 1,400 pounds, says in part: "Small business enough, but we must make the best of it so long as we are doing as well and a little better than our neighbors. The *Rialto* arrived safe, short passage. The *Belize* gone to Smyrna, the *September* to Port au Platt, the *October* to Curaçao, the *January*, *May Bee*, *June*, *August* and *November* all are fishing this season. Have some prospect of selling the *Rialto*. If I do not shall take her to Kingston and give her a thorough repairing." This letter shows the whereabouts of his small vessels and what they were doing at this time, and an owner's dependence on his captains in chartering vessels.

In March, 1850, she was at New Orleans from European ports, leaking 600 strokes an hour and in bad condition. She was repaired so that Captain Peter Hansen, her master, thought he could get her to Boston and was loaded with a light cargo of pork and cotton



and sailed for Boston. On the passage she leaked very badly but finally reached Boston, was repaired and sailed for the South with a cargo of hay and ice. Soon after leaving port she again leaked and was finally abandoned with eight feet of water in her hold; the captain, officers and crew being taken off by a ship bound to New York, where they arrived April 21, 1850.

The ship *Rialto* was one of Joseph Holmes' most successful vessels, earning for her owners a large amount of money. Under the command of Captains Sampson, Holmes and Adams of Kingston, and last by Captain Peter Hansen, who from his long service with Mr. Holmes as captain and mate in his vessels, could almost be called a Kingston man, she was a truly Kingston ship and she usually had some Kingston men as officers and members of her crew.

The trade in which she was engaged was hard on a ship, the cotton cargoes being stowed so close that the decks and beams were often started and the return cargoes of iron, salt, coal and marble, very heavy, causing a vessel to labor in a sea more than with a usual general cargo. This greatly strained a vessel and the *Rialto* must have been strongly built to withstand the many years of constant use with little money spent for repairs, and the fact that she was an old vessel when lost and had never been sold, shows how well she was always regarded by her owners. The Holmes', being builders as well as owners of vessels, usually sold them when they were comparatively new, and so were not called upon to expend any considerable amount of money for repairs, as is always necessary after some years at sea. When they sold a vessel they had one or two more ready for sea to take the place of the one sold and thus their fleets were constantly increased.

November 19, 1843, the ship *Rialto* of Kingston, Mass., Captain William S. Adams, was reported arriving at New Orleans, 33 days' passage from the Downs, England. Captain Adams writes Joseph Holmes that the *Rialto's* last passage is the shortest from the Downs that has been made.

The following letter from Captain Adams gives the account of the cutting away of the *Rialto's* mizzenmast on the passage from Boston to Mobile and New Orleans in ballast:

MR. JOSEPH HOLMES, New Orleans, Feb. 13, 1843.  
Dear Sir:

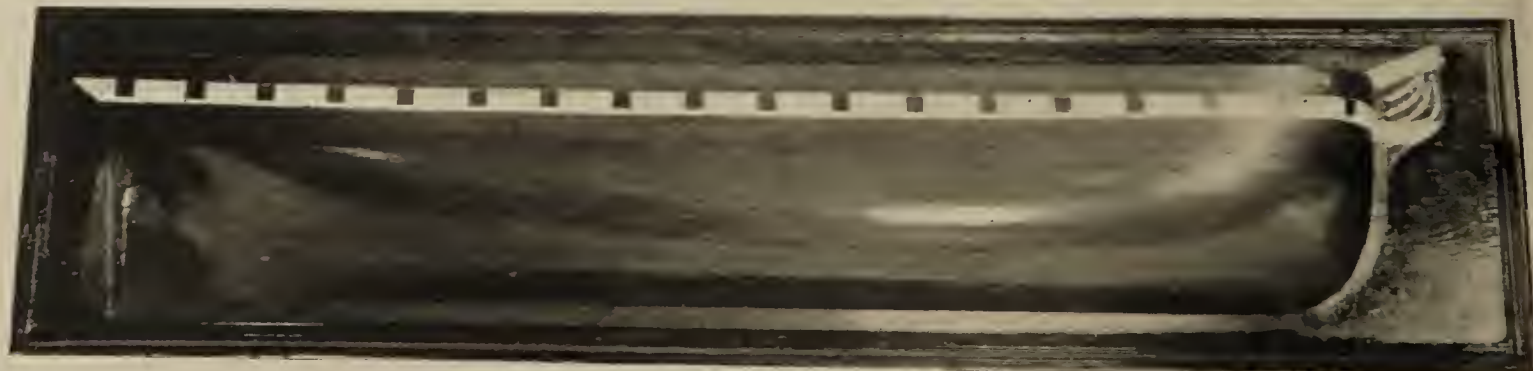
I arrived here, this morning with the loss of mizzenmast, sails and rigging attached, foresail and foretop-sail. On the 26th January while scudding in a hard gale from the N. W. was struck by a heavy sea; shifted the ballast and carried away all of the stanchions forward of the after-hatch. The ship lay twelve hours with her lee-rail entirely under water and lower-yards in the water. I tried every method to get the ship before the wind started the water on deck but to no purpose. Finding her ballast still shifting, cut the mizzenmast away, when she fell off nearly before the

wind and sea which shifted the ballast back some. The wreck of the mast cleared itself and she came to again and lay with her lee-rail entirely under water, until we trimmed the ballast and got the deck out of water in about twelve hours after she was hove down. She made no water, if she had she would have sunk before we righted her.

I can get rigging for 11 cts. and good russia canvass for 18½ cts. bolt and the mast and spars very cheap. Freights are quoted at 1 ct. I cannot get that today but have engaged at 15-16 cts. to Liverpool for 1500 bales.

Yours Obdt. Servant,  
(Signed) WM. S. ADAMS

Sidney George Fisher, in his book entitled "The True Daniel Webster" in the chapter on the Northeastern Boundry Dispute, speaks of the brig *Creole*, which vessel was engaged in the winter of 1841 and 1842 in carrying a cargo of slaves and merchandise from Richmond, Va., to New Orleans. The slaves rose upon the master and crew and took the brig into



MODEL OF SHIP *Rialto* OF KINGSTON, 1834



Nassau, British West Indies, where the authorities set the slaves at liberty, England having some years before abolished slavery in all her colonies. Mr. Webster at that time was Secretary of State, living on his farm in Marshfield, Mass., near Kingston, when his duties at Washington permitted, and his settlement of the *Creole* case and the Northeastern Boundary Dispute with Lord Ashburton, who represented England, aroused much unfavorable criticism in the North, which later greatly affected his political career.

The story that connects the ship *Rialto* with the brig *Creole* is, that about that time, one of Joseph Holmes' vessels fell in with a slaver at sea, short of food and water. On being furnished with the necessary supplies payment was made in Spanish doubloons, which were brought home to Joseph Holmes. The dates on these gold pieces were, 1837, and in this year, Spanish gold was common in the coast towns of the South, there being many cargoes of salt brought to them from Cadiz, Spain. As the *Creole* was owned in the South and bound to a southern port, it can be easily understood why

Spanish gold was used, instead of American or English gold, especially on board ship.

The first part of the winter of 1841 and 1842 Captain Adams in the ship *Rialto* arrived at New Orleans, and going or coming would place him in the track of the brig *Creole*. No other of the larger vessels can be placed in that vicinity at that time. The smaller vessels belonging to Joseph Holmes would not have had any provisions to spare, as their voyages were short and no extra supplies were carried. The larger ones, owing to the length of their passages, were obliged to have a greater quantity and the *Rialto* could have easily furnished the brig all that was required, which must have amounted to quite a sum, as there were a number of doubloons brought home.

In these years, Mr. Holmes' vessels were constantly visiting southern ports and on that account any transaction with a vessel of the *Creole's* description would naturally have been kept as quiet as possible, in both the North and South. If our story is correct and the brig had not received any provisions and so been unable to have reached Nassau, Mr. Webster would not have had this additional dispute to increase his difficulties with Lord Ashburton in his final settlement with England.

Mr. Webster's home in Marshfield was only eight miles from Kingston, the hailing port of the *Rialto* and the home of her builders, owners and commander. It would be a strange circumstance if one of his neighbor's ships was the means of bringing the question of slavery into the affair.

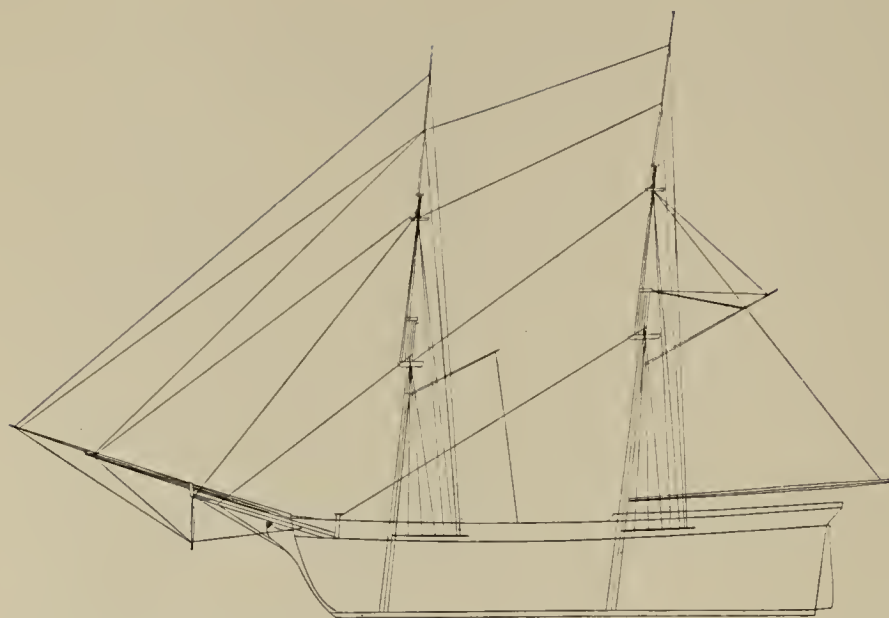
Mr. Alexander Holmes of Kingston has the model of this ship and also a painting of her as she was entering the port of Marseilles, Paraclete Holmes, master, in 1838. This painting is done in oils, by Pelligrini, who was a famous French artist of marine pictures of that period. The model shows her with very full bows and heavy quarters, but for all this, she seemed to make fair passages. It was carrying capacity and not speed that seemed to be required in those days and the ships of this style were called "Cotton boxes."



CAPTAIN WILLIAM S. ADAMS

## CAPTAIN WILLIAM S. ADAMS

Captain William S. Adams was born in Kingston in 1808 and was a son of Captain Charles Adams of Kingston. Marrying Lucy Eveline, a daughter of Joseph Holmes, he sailed in his ships for a longer period than any of the other captains, with the exception

SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF THE FULL RIGGED BRIG *Belize* OF KINGSTON, 1838

December 18, 1829. The captain of this vessel was Theophilus Burgess with Benjamin Cook of Kingston, mate. Later he was mate with Captain Holmes in the ship *Rialto*, and when Captain Holmes took over the *Herculean* he became the *Rialto's* captain.

He retired from the sea soon after 1850, but was employed by Joseph Holmes in looking after his vessels when in port, continuing to do this until Mr. Holmes' death.

He built and lived in the house now owned by Eugene G. Ayer, dying there in 1888.

#### BRIG *Belize*

Brig *Belize* of Kingston, 162 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes, David Beal, measurer, in 1838; owned by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes.

#### REMARKS

The first captain of the brig *Belize* was Allen Dawes of Duxbury, in 1838. She was engaged in voyages to the West Indies and Honduras, James H. Dawes of Kingston, mate, and later master. In 1844 she made a voyage to Smyrna. In connection with one of this brig's voyages in August, 1847, James H. Dawes, master, the following is found in R. B. Forbes' book, "Notes on Wrecks and Rescues":

##### THE SHIP *Mameluke* AND BRIG *Belize*

The new ship *Mameluke*, Captain Christiansen, of 1,000 tons, owned by Delano & Co., sailed from New York in August, 1847, bound for Liverpool. She had on board, all told, 64 persons. Among the passengers were two ladies. Shortly after leaving port she was overtaken by a southwest hurricane; and as her rigging was slack, she was kept before the wind under close-reefed topsails and reefed foresail, to set it up. The gale increasing, the fore and mizzen topsails were taken in; but hardly had they been furled when the ship broached to, a tremendous sea broke on board, threw the ship nearly on her beam ends, swept away her deck-house and forty-two persons, broke the mizzen-mast halfway up, the mainmast just below the top, the fore topmast and jib-boom at the caps, leaving the fore-yard a cockbill. The hatches burst open, the water rushed between decks, and in a very short time she became waterlogged. She had a full poop deck, and on this the survivors, 22 in number, sought shelter. The sea rolled over her waist and tore away the wreck of the broken spars and sails and smashed

the boats. Most of the water and provisions were submerged, and only such scraps as could be fished from the cabin were left for the people to eat.

The first night was dreadful. The tempest howled with unabated violence, and the waves frequently rolled over the poop; so that the people had to make themselves fast to keep from being washed away. During the next day and the day following several vessels passed, and some changed their course as if they had not seen them. One approached so near that a man was seen on her quarterdeck surveying them through a spy-glass but she too "passed by on the other side." At last a small brig crossed her stern; and the captain hailed them and told them to be of good cheer, for he would lie by them while he had a stick standing. She was under a close-reefed fore topsail and close-reefed fore and aft mainsail, and rounded to under the lee of the wreck. The sea was then too rough for any boat to live. At the end of twenty-four hours the gale moderated, but the sea was still very rough; yet the brig hove to and hoisted out her only boat. It was manned by the mate and three seamen,

of his brother-in-law, Captain Paraclete Holmes.

Like Captain Holmes he was a very competent ship-master and business man, and at different times took charge of nearly all of Joseph Holmes' larger ships engaged in the cotton trade. After being placed in command he soon acquired an interest in the vessels he sailed which was retained until they were sold or lost.

In a letter to Joseph Holmes, dated July 12, 1830, he is mentioned as second mate of the ship *Helen Mar* of Kingston, having probably joined this ship on her first voyage,



leaving only three persons on board. The two ladies and two men were first rescued, and when the ladies reached the brig they fainted from sheer exhaustion. The boat could not take more than five persons at a time in addition to her crew, and consequently had to make six trips before all were rescued. Captain Christiansen was the last to leave the wreck, which shortly afterward must have gone down, for it was not seen again.

The brig was the *Belize* of Kingston, Mass., commanded by Capt. James H. Dawes, bound from Boston for Port-au-Prince. She encountered the same gale which wrecked the *Mameluke* and had to throw her deck-load overboard to ease her. As his vessel was very small, and the people saved were much exhausted, Captain Dawes decided to put into New York, the nearest port. He and his mate surrendered their berths to the ladies and bunked out on the lockers; most of the men had to remain on deck, although the sailors gave up the forecastle to those who were suffering from exhaustion. All that the captain, his mate, and crew could do was done to make the poor, shipwrecked people comfortable; and they had the pleasure of landing them in New York. The brig performed her voyage to Port-au-Prince, but upon her return to Boston the party who had chartered her refused to pay the charter because she had deviated from her course. In vain Captain Dawes showed that most of the people he had saved would have died from exposure had he attempted to take them to the West Indies; the charterer was unrelenting,—he had “the law on his side.” Captain Dawes sailed the brig on shares. He sued the charterer, who employed Rufus Choate to defend the suit. In the mean time the *Boston Post* exposed the story. Mr. Choate told his client that he must have the case settled by arbitration, for though he had the law on his side, humanity was against him, and no jury could be found to decide in his favor. It was referred, but the arbitrators were confined to the

money question only, and they stripped Captain Dawes of all he possessed. His humanity cost him between two and three thousand dollars.

After such an experience one would naturally suppose that Captain Dawes would, like many others, find it convenient to see as little of wrecks as possible. To his lasting honor be it recorded that hardly had he been again in command before he saw a brig in distress and ran out of his way to give her relief. It was the brig *Ciudad Bolivar* in a sinking condition. The weather was boisterous; and at great risk he took off all hands, twelve in number, and landed them safely in the West Indies. He incurred the risk of saving them at the expense of feeding them afterward, for he sailed this vessel on shares, as he had done the *Belize*. His owner did not lose a cent. Subsequently, while in command of the ship *Matchless* of Boston, of which he was part owner, he fell in with the ship *Japan* of Bath, Captain Emmons, off Cape Horn, bound from Cardiff for San Francisco. He ran off his course, and when he reached her found she was on fire and could not be saved. Captain Dawes rounded to; and though a heavy swell was running, he rescued all hands, twenty-five in number, and carried twenty of them to San Francisco. He spoke an English bark which agreed to take five on board, and he supplied her with water and provisions for their use.

While others have been applauded and rewarded very properly, Captain Dawes has lost over three thousand dollars by his humanity. His father and two brothers were shipmasters, and all had rescued many men from wrecks, of which no note was taken. Captain Dawes is 64 years of age, lives at Kingston, Mass., and is one of the Trustees of the Boston Marine Society, respected by all who know him. The party who fleeced him boasted that he made \$500 clear by the operation; but he has been many years in his grave.

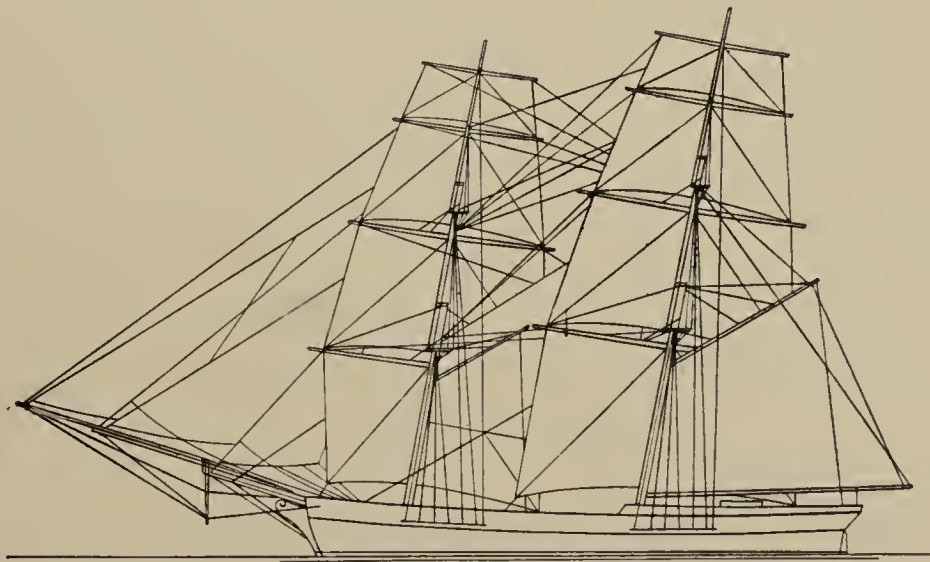
In 1849, February, the brig was in London with Elijah Stokes, master, and later sold.

#### SHIP *Herculean*

Ship *Herculean* of Kingston, 542 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes, in 1839 Horace Holmes, master carpenter; owned by Joseph Holmes.

#### REMARKS

The ship *Herculean* was the largest and most expensive vessel that had been built in Kingston at this time. Her dimensions were 135 feet 9 inches long, 29 feet 6 inches wide and 14 feet 9 inches deep and was valued at \$32,000 when ready for sea. She was built in 1839 and her first voyage was from Boston to Mobile in October, 1839, 22 days' passage. Captain Benjamin Cook of Kingston, master. She was used in the cotton trade between Southern



SAIL PLAN OF THE FULL RIGGED BRIG *Belize* OF KINGSTON, 1838



ports and Europe till she was sold in 1850. About 1843 Captain Cook gave up his command and Captain Paraclete Holmes was in charge of her most of the time until she was sold.

In going to Southern ports from Boston and New York these vessels often carried passengers. Sometimes the cotton cargoes were taken from New York to England and France. In letters to Joseph Holmes from Captain Cook, as to her first voyage we find he had a number of passengers and that the ship was very fast and that she was much admired in Mobile. Captain Cook says:

The ship is in every respect a first-rate vessel, she leaks but very little and out-sailed anything I fell in with on the passage. I do not consider it a fair trial as my rigging was slack and crew very light, which made it necessary for me to be careful about carrying sail. She steered like a pilot boat.

From Mobile she went to Havre with cotton and there is called as "fine a ship as ever came into this port and a great number of people came on board every day to look at her." She went from Havre to New Orleans with two cabin and ninety-five Swiss passengers. The next voyage was to Liverpool, cargo 1781 bales of cotton, 100 bales of which was on deck. The freight charge in money was 3,282 pounds. In one of Captain Holmes' letters as to a voyage from New York to Liverpool, he says that June 25, 1846, on the easterly edge of the Grand Banks he passed the schooner *November*, Joseph Holmes, owner. He says he tried to speak her but could not without hauling in all the studding sails and gave it up, supposing they were doing all they could toward a voyage. At this time he speaks in his letters of constantly seeing brigs and schooners owned by Joseph Holmes, on his passages or in southern ports. There is a story that Joseph Holmes said when told that two of his vessels were in collision off Hatteras, that he should have to stop building, as there was not room in the Atlantic for them. As he owned them both he could not get damages.

Under date of December 27, 1841, Captain Cook writes to Joseph Holmes from Savannah that on his passage from Philadelphia he spoke the schooner *January* of Kingston, Mass., a fine new vessel with a black ball in her foresail, bound to North Carolina.

February 5, 1844, Captain Paraclete Holmes writes his father, Joseph Holmes, that all their ships have a black ball in their spankers and if you see any reports of that kind you will be able to judge who it is. They are all to sail about the same time. Owners were now beginning to use some distinguishing mark on some sail on their vessels so that they could be more easily identified when spoken at sea, or entering port, and Joseph Holmes seems to have been one of the very first owners to adopt such a device, his schooners and brigs having a black ball in their foresails. By 1850, the packet ships belonging to various lines running between New York and Boston to England had some distinguishing mark on their sails; the vessels of the Black Ball Line showing a black ball in the foretopsail, the Red Star Line a red star and the Red Cross Line a red cross. The names of the ships then owned by him and their masters all being then engaged in the cotton trade and loading for Europe were as follows:

Ship *Rialto*, Captain Chase  
Ship *Herculean*, Captain P. Holmes  
Ship *Raritan* (new), Captain W. S. Adams

Captain Chase relieved Captain Paraclete Holmes, who had been in the *Herculean* a number of years, taking command in October, 1846, at Boston and continued in the ship as master till August, 1849. Captain Peter Hansen, who had been mate on Mr. Holmes' ships, took charge of the *Rialto*, succeeding Captain Chase, continuing as master of the *Rialto* till she was lost in 1850. A letter from Captain Chase to Joseph Holmes, dated Havre, December, 1846, gives an account of the narrow escape of the *Herculean* from disaster by fire at sea. The letter reads:

JOSEPH HOLMES, Esq.,  
Kingston, Mass.

Dear Sir: I wrote you the evening previous and on the morning of sailing from Charleston, informing you of my proceedings and prospects up to the latest

moment. I have now to inform you that soon after closing my last we came safely over the Bar, discharged the pilot and bore away to the east with a fine breeze from the S.W. At two P.M. wind freshening took in topgallant sails. At three furled jib and main-



sail. At four close reefed the topsails fore and aft and reefed the foresail. At five the weather wearing an exceedingly wild appearance took in the mizzen-top-sail, clewed up the fore-topsail and while the men were in the act of laying aloft to furl it a whirlwind was seen approaching from N.W. The helm was instantly hove hard aport but before the ship had time to answer it the squall was upon us in great fury, blowing the fore-topsail all away below the reefs and splitting the mainsail from the reef-band to the foot rope and in spite of all we could do to the contrary, the ship broached to, head to the north. Furling the maintopsail, got the star-board fore-sheet aft and finally succeeded in getting her again before the wind. Scudded through the night.

The 23rd, 24th, and 25th, we had better weather and I had got all things right again when on the 26th we had another violent gale from W. N.W., which soon reduced us to a reefed foresail. The ship behaved well, scudded like a yacht, but unfortunately at two o'clock P.M. while a heavy squall of hail was passing over us a single flash of forked lightening was seen just forward of the maintop the report of which was exactly like that from a cannon. The effect on the ship was like that of a heavy weight having fallen with great violence on the deck, causing her to vibrate for several seconds and severely stunning the men about the decks. After a close examination no marks of its having struck the hull or spars could be found.

At six o'clock the same evening a strong smell of gas and smoke issuing from the after-hatch was perceptible. The foresail was immediately hauled up the helm put to port, brought the ship's head to the south, cleared away and opened the main-hatch with all possible dispatch when the cotton was found burning freely around the mainmast. We all went at it like so many tigers, breaking out cargo and hoisting it up, but from its having been uncommonly hard screwed, our progress was very slow. In the meantime, the fire having got air, was spreading rapidly having lit into a blaze and showing the chances of subduing it from that direction much against us. At seven and one-half o'clock P.M. we cut through the deck to the windward of the mainmast and brought a cask of water near the hole knocked out a portion of the head and let it down upon the fire. This had a very good effect and by following it up with water from the pumps, we were enabled to keep it under and prevent it spreading until we had broken out and got around it finally extinguishing it at eleven o'clock. At midnight again, bore away.

Here much might be said upon the horror of such a situation, but knowing well how little sympathy is usually extended towards such cases, I forbear, hop-

ing that Heaven in its mercy, will spare me the repetition of another such a Thanksgiving day and night.

On the second of December, near the longitude of the Grand Bank, took strong gales from the N.E. with high seas which afterward shifted to S.E. and continued until about the 15th of December when the wind came round to westward and gave us a fine run.

Came into the Channel on the 21st and hove to off the port of Havre on the night of the 23rd, took a pilot on the morning of the 24th, with the wind from the east blowing directly out of the harbor. On the afternoon of the 25th, I with others made a signal for a steam boat, but being nearest to the Mole Head I had the misfortune to be the first served. The boat came out, took our hawser and we clewed up the sails. The boat pointed her head towards the harbor, and when very near the mouth, which is narrow, she found herself likely to come in contact with two outward bound French coasters. She cut our hawser, dodged out of the way and in attempting to steer the ship between them, we struck both of them, one on each bow, damaging the ship to the amount of about one hundred dollars, and the other vessels together about four hundred more.

This affair is now in the processes of law and every one says I shall have to pay the bills for the whole damage, upon the principal that any foreign vessel damaging a French one is doomed to pay the costs. But I shall not pay it until French law or French justice compels me to do so. I contend that the owners, master, two officers of the *Herculean* had no more control over her than if they had all been in Paris. I have endeavored to take all proper measures for a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the lightning scrape. We threw overboard about fifteen bales of cotton which together with the damage received by water I suppose will be borne by general average on ship's freight and cargo, but what the amount will be, I cannot tell, not having yet broken bulk and I expect it will be several days yet before things will be in proper train for doing so.

I hope you will not think this long story unnecessary, the ship must lose some money and what is worse she must lose time which under present circumstances is more than money. I wish you to know exactly how I am situated which I have endeavored to communicate and must acknowledge that I either manage my affairs very badly or my evil star, if there is such a thing, is much in the ascendancy. I leave you to judge which, and ask as much of your charity as you can conscientiously allow me, and remain your

Obedient Servant,

Signed, ISAIAH CHASE.

There is no date in the above letter as to when the *Herculean* left Charleston, but a previous letter shows it to have been November 22, 1846; cargo, cotton. Considering the weather and the delay caused by the fire, she made a very good passage.

This is the only time that any of the Holmes' vessels were ever damaged by fire, which is remarkable when we consider the length of time and the number of their vessels engaged in the cotton trade. Sailing vessels carrying cotton for cargo were often on fire and some were lost from this cause. Even today, when steamers are used for this business, it is



ORIGINAL FIGUREHEAD OF SHIP *Herculean* OF KINGSTON, 1839



quite common to hear of the vessel and cargo damaged by fire and they are furnished with all modern equipment for extinguishing fire at sea.

In February, 1857, she was reported as on a passage from Singapore to New York and no more is known about her after that date.

## CAPTAIN BENJAMIN COOK

Captain Benjamin Cook was born in Kingston in 1809 and died in 1880. He lived in a large white house on the Wapping Road, this place being now called Spring Brook Farm. Although he always lived in Kingston very little is known of the voyages he may have made in Kingston vessels. A letter to Joseph Holmes from the captain of the ship *Helen Mar* of Kingston, dated July 12, 1830, speaks of him as the mate and leaving her to go in another ship.

From this it appears that he must have gone to sea quite young to have become mate at this time, for he was then twenty-one years old. In 1839, he was master of the ship *Herculean* of Kingston, new, and continued in her until 1843, as told in the "Remarks" on the voyages of this vessel. The next year, a letter to Joshua Delano from London, shows him to be in command of the ship *Alesto* of Kingston, owned by John Sever and Joshua Delano of Kingston, and nothing more can be found to connect him with any Kingston vessels.

His picture is taken from a portrait in oils by Guiseppe Tapani, 1852, now in the Kingston Public Library.

The oil painting of the *Herculean* was done for him on his first voyage in her, 1840, as this was the only time the ship was in Liverpool while in his charge. The artist's name is not given anywhere on the painting, but he must have been one of the best of that day as can be seen by a careful study of the picture. From the position of the ship the figurehead can easily be recognized and compared with the original.

This painting is now owned by F. Russel Adams of Kingston, a relative of Captain Cook, and is highly valued by him.

FIGUREHEAD OF THE SHIP *Herculean* OF KINGSTON, 1839

January 28, 1849, the *Herculean* was at Glasgow, Scotland, with a cargo of cotton from Apalachicola. Her master, Captain Isaiah Chase of West Harwich, Mass., who had been in her the past three years, writes Joseph Holmes of the ship's arrival, June 23, 1849, after a passage of forty-six days, and that she has leaked very freely all of the passage. In consequence of this the pumps were badly worn, refusing to work, and new ones were absolutely necessary. He expects that the cargo is considerably damaged, as at times, there was two feet of water in her. In closing this letter he says, "I intend to sail for Boston about the 18th of July with about the same cargo as last year, but, unfortunately, at much less rates, only eighteen shillings per ton for pig iron, and other things in proportion, with probably about as many passengers as last year at the same rate."

On July 6, 1849, Captain Chase writes again to Mr. Holmes and says:

JOSEPH HOLMES, Esq.,  
Dear Sir:

July 6, 1849.

I wrote you by the last steamer informing you of my arrival, etc. Have now to say that we have completed discharging, found some considerable damaged cargo, but not half as much as I expected. Have not yet settled or received the freight, expect to do so in a day or two and have no doubts but I shall remit to London one thousand five hundred pounds before the next mail for the U. S. We have discharged as much ballast as we dare to and am in

momentary expectation of receiving iron. The caulking I mentioned in my last will be completed to-day together with the lower deck. The seams outside were found much harder than I expected to find them and I do not hesitate to say that the whole trouble with the ship is in the bow and that will never be remedied until it is strengthened with bolts and extra breast hooks. I do not think that reflects upon the credit of the ship at all, on the contra, it is wonderful or rather surprising to me how she has managed to carry such an immense weight hanging on her stem for so long a time. It is the



CAPTAIN BENJAMIN COOK

*From a Portrait*

only part of her that I have seen show the least signs of weakness. The expense of caulking the lower deck may be more than you counted upon, but when I joined the ship Captain Holmes advised me to have it done the first opportunity. It had got to be very open and water spilt there went directly into the lower hole, this, with passengers is sometimes very annoying. I shall write you again by the next steamer.

And remain your  
Obedient Servant,  
Signed, ISAIAH CHASE.

P.S.—I shall not dabble with the bow at all but leave it with you to do what you choose when the ship returns. The new pumps are now going in.

Signed, ISAIAH CHASE.

A letter from Captain Chase from West Harwich to Mr. Holmes, dated August 27, 1849, shows that the *Herculean* arrived in Boston the last of the month, but no further account can be found in Joseph Holmes' letters concerning the removal of her figurehead. It has always been told that it was taken off on account of its great weight, but nothing was ever known about it making her leak so badly until Captain Chase's

letters were found and mention made of it in them.

From what Captain Chase writes as to strengthening the ship forward, this extensive alteration must have been done in Boston after his last voyage in her, when a smaller or billet-head was fitted on in its place, very likely by carpenters sent up from the Kingston shipyard, as Joseph Holmes always repaired his own vessels, if possible. It had been on the ship ten years and after it was taken off, was brought to Kingston and fastened to the westerly end of the second story of the rigging and sail loft in the Holmes shipyard at the Landing, remaining there until the building was torn down by Edward Holmes a few years before his death in 1888. For several years after this the figure lay on the ground among the old timbers in the yard, finally coming into the possession of Mr. Elsworth C. Bailey. It now stands among the shrubs on the grounds of his residence in Kingston facing toward the Massachusetts Bay, never again to be washed by the seas of the Western Ocean on a winter's passage, or by the warmer waters of the Gulf of Mexico or Caribbean Sea.

A few of these full-length figureheads are still to be found in some of the seaport towns of New England, but they are becoming more rare with each passing year and are hardly to be compared in size or modeling to this that came from the bows of the *Herculean*.

From 1849, when the ship arrived in Boston and it was brought to Kingston, up to the present time it has always been exposed to the weather, but in spite of this is still in a remarkable state of preservation.

The figure is seven feet tall and weighs about 800 pounds, and with the exception of the right knee and arm is carved entire from a pine log.

#### SHIP *Alesto*

The ship *Alesto* of Kingston, 420 tons, built at Kingston by Lysander Bartlett in 1840; owned by John Sever, James N. Sever, Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano, Melzar Whitten of Kingston, and Henry Whiting, Josiah Finney and W. S. Finney of Plymouth.

#### REMARKS

Henry Whiting was her first master, but did not stay in her long, for in 1844 she was reported to be loading in London in command of Captain Benjamin Cook of Kingston.



The picture of this ship is from an oil painting that Captain Cook had painted for himself. The date on it is 1846 and the artist's name is C. F. Feeleler. The vessel is shown leaving or entering a Spanish Port and there is no further record of her.

### SHIP *Leodes*

Ship *Leodes* of Kingston, 445 tons, built at Kingston by Lysander Bartlett in 1841; owned by John Sever.

### REMARKS

This was the largest vessel built on Jones River above the present railroad bridge. In November, 1846, this ship was at New Orleans, loading for Rotterdam. Robbins, master. Colonel John Sever's daughter Emily says that the ship *Leodes* was launched at midnight and that tar barrels were burned on both banks of the river to give light to the workmen and people viewing the launch. At the time of launching the night tides were much higher than in the daytime and on account of the ship's size the highest tides were needed for a successful launch.

A book entitled "Old Ships of New England," published by the Lauriat Company of Boston, in 1923, contains pictures of many of the more famous sailing vessels, and among them is a picture of the ship *Leodes* of Boston, Captain Edward Graves, entering Brouwershaven on the 19th of May, 1856, coming from Samarang. It is painted by Spin of Amsterdam. This shows the ship to have been owned in Boston at that time.

Through the courtesy of Mr. C. B. Webster of the C. B. Webster Company of Boston, who compiled the book for Charles E. Lauriat Company, the picture of the *Leodes*, entering Brouwershaven, is reproduced here.

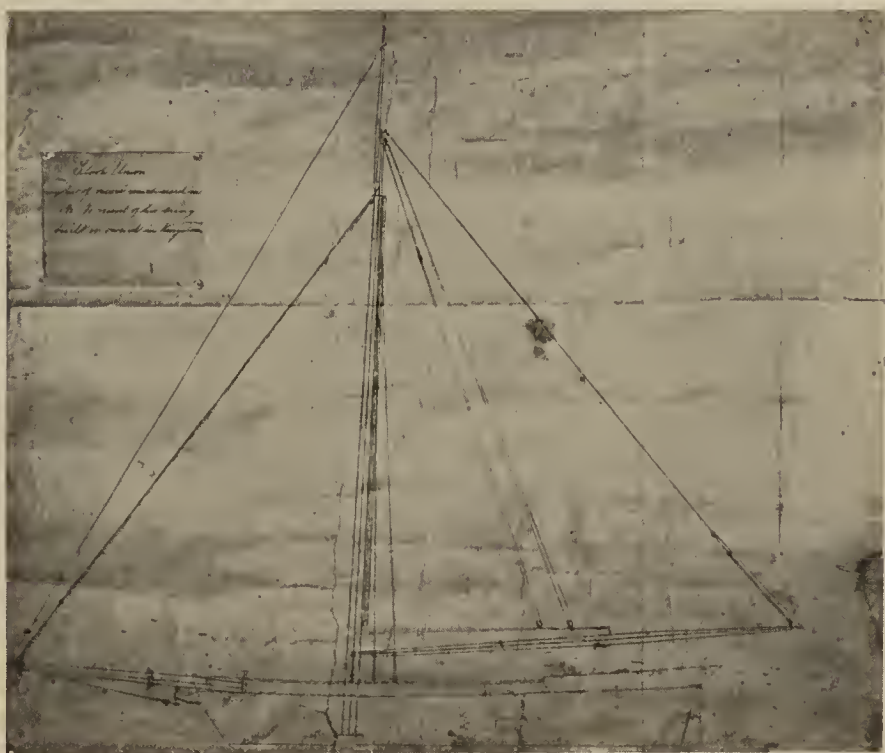
The picture of the bark *Stafford* of Kingston, now owned (in 1924) by Alexander Holmes of Kingston, and painted by an unknown marine artist, is very similar to the one of the *Leodes*, so much so that it seems as though it was the work of the same man, as the position of the vessels, the way the sails are drawing and condition of the sea are exactly alike in both pictures. Pictures of the *Rialto* of Kingston and *Propontis* of Salem show a like similarity and we know in this case both were painted by the same artist at Marseilles at about the same time. The only difference is that the *Propontis* is under all plain sail on the starboard tack and the *Rialto* under shorten sail on the port tack.

### SCHOONER *June*

Schooner *June* of Kingston, 88 tons, built at Kingston by Nathaniel D. Drew, in 1841; owned by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes.

### REMARKS

February 1, 1842, the schooner *June* was at Kingston, Mass., ready for sea in command of Captain Luther Crowell. She was used for fishing, coasting and West India voyages, and when new she was spoken off the southern coast by Captain Paraclete Holmes of ship *Herculean*. Captain John A. Morse was in her many years and was in command when she was lost on the southern coast, November 12, 1852.

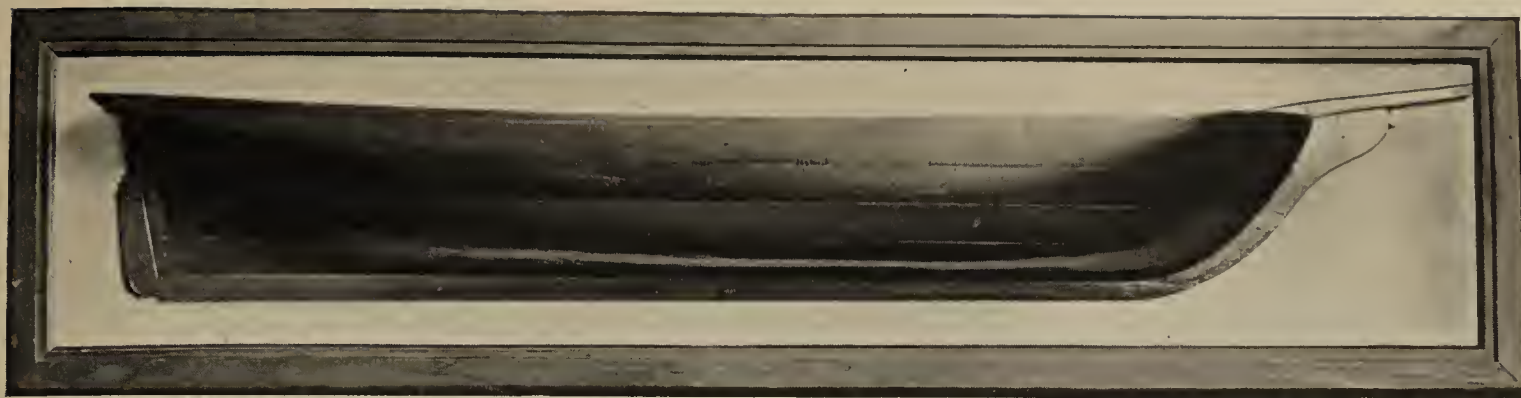


SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF SLOOP *Union*



SHIP *Alesto* OF KINGSTON. BENJAMIN COOK, MASTER, 1846



MODEL OF SCHOONER *June* OF KINGSTON, 1841

An old letter of that time to Joseph Holmes, reads that some merchants of Charleston, S. C., have a bill against Captain Morse and owners of the schooner *June*, as part of the cargo of rice was saved from the wreck of the schooner and sold and the proceeds used for protest, Captain's board and expenses home, the owners of the vessel ought to bear a proportion of the expenses.

Alexander Holmes has the half or working model of the schooner which shows her to have been a full bowed craft with a long floor and easy run. During these years there were large numbers of vessels of this size and rig used in the business of fishing, coasting and West India voyages and although not built for speed, good passages were made and they were always in demand; their draft of water allowing them to visit ports not reached by larger vessels. Carrying small crews with no long waits for cargo, their running expenses were small as compared to the larger vessels and little difficulty was experienced in the showing of a profit for the year's work. Later, when railroads became the carriers, business was centered by them in the larger ports and the small vessels were no longer used as packets and coasters, and few were built, except for fishing and carrying lumber from eastern ports.

#### ALEXANDER HOLMES

Alexander Holmes was the oldest of Joseph Holmes' sons and was born in Kingston in 1803.

Unlike his brothers, Paraclete and Edward, he never went to sea, but early in life became an owner in his father's vessels, assisting him in their construction and outfitting. As the business increased he was obliged to make frequent visits to Boston and New York to see to the chartering and general management of the vessels when in port, with the result that he soon acquired a large acquaintance in the shipping circles of these cities. Whenever a vessel was sold, that was not in Kingston, he usually attended to the business and letters to his father often speak of the offers he had secured for them when in Boston or New York.

In 1839, he leased the upper shipyard at the Landing of John Drew and began building vessels for himself, but retained his holdings in those owned with his father. Previous to this he had owned this part of the Landing, conveying it back to the Dews a short time before leasing. None of his letters or books are to be found, so only a brief account can be given about the vessels he had built for him in the old Drew building yard.

There are two paintings, two models, and three sheer and spar plans of them left, which are now owned by his grandson, Alexander Holmes, of Kingston.

The last vessel built for him was the brig *Frank Henry* in 1854, and becoming president of the Old Colony Rail Road Company in that year, he soon after gave up all of his interests in shipping. He was president of the railroad company for over twelve years, retiring from this office in 1866 owing to his health.

On his marriage he took up his residence in a house on the Main Street near his father's and opposite to the Town Green, afterward building the house on his large estate near the Great Bridge over Jones River, now owned and occupied by his grandson, Alexander,



SHIP *Leodes* OF KINGSTON, 1841





*Photographed by George E. Noyes, Newburyport*

SHIP *Leodes* OF KINGSTON IN STORM, 1841





ALEXANDER HOLMES

Holmes, and called The Jones River Farm. He died there in 1868, sixty-five years old.

#### SCHOONER *Brazos*

Schooner *Brazos* of Kingston, 99 tons, built at Kingston by Nathaniel D. Drew in 1841; owned by Alexander Holmes, Dawson Lincoln, Benjamin and Joshua Delano, and Melzar Whitten.

#### REMARKS

Dawson Lincoln, one of the owners, master, when new. This is a photograph from the original plan of the designer, Nathaniel D. Drew.

#### CAPTAIN PARACLETE HOLMES

He was the second son of Joseph Holmes and was born in Kingston in 1804.

Like many others who lived here and commanded vessels, he commenced his seafaring life at an early age. With the exception of a voyage or two in the ship *Helen Mar*, after she was sold he always went in his father's vessels.

When twenty-two years old he was mate of the brig *Sophia and Eliza* of Kingston, bound from Boston to Lisbon, and the following is a partial account of the voyage:

"The brig, *Sophia and Eliza*, was 85 feet long, 23 feet 6 inches wide, and 11 feet 9 inches deep, and her tonnage was 206 tons. She was built in Kingston by Joseph Holmes, owned by him and Joseph W. Plasket of Nantucket and registered at the Plymouth Custom House as built in 1824. She was sold to Duxbury in 1841 and registered as hailing from Duxbury rigged as a bark. We only know of one voyage made by this vessel which was from Boston to Lisbon, touching at Gibraltar and from there to Callao, Peru, and return to Boston. She sailed from Boston, September 27, 1826, Joseph W. Plaskett, master, with Paraclete Holmes, who afterward commanded his father's vessels so successfully, making his first voyage as mate. Cargo, staves. The mate writing his father, Joseph Holmes from Boston, September 21, 1826, says, in part, as to the prospects of the voyage as follows:

#### HONOURED PARENT:

I rec'd your letter and my clothes. We expect to sail Sunday morning wind and weather permitting. Our crew I dislike very much, very light but presume sober men or rather boys. The vessel is in good plight for sea going. I see nothing to prevent

the voyage being pleasant except absence from home. Capt. Plaskett says he does not know how long he shall stay out. We must ship for a voyage anywhere from 6 to 18 months. I shall not. If I can't do nothing better before that time I will quit the sea and dig clams.

They did not get to sea as expected for he writes his father again from Boston, September 26, 1826, saying:

#### HONOURED PARENT:

We move very slowly owing to weather. We was to have sailed Tuesday but owing to the weather and some other things we shall not sail till tomorrow. Our crew are shipped and on board such as they be. All of them light hands. We have but one able bodied man among them. I dislike some movements on board very much and shall make them known when we get well regulated, that will not be till we get

to sea. You will please keep the run of us and if any chance, write me. I expect to go from Lisbon to New Orleans, from there to Liverpool and elsewhere, according to the Old Man's feelings. We stay out till everybody else is wore out. I shall not write again before we sail, you will remember me to all.

From your affctnte son,  
Signed, P. HOLMES.



He evidently soon got any "movements" he disliked, "regulated" on getting to sea, for nothing more is heard about the matter. He never had to dig the clams he speaks of in his first letter, but completed the voyage and continued to follow the sea constantly nearly twenty-five years longer, in command of his father's largest vessels, until he retired about 1855 to become president of the Warren Insurance Company, a marine insurance company of Boston.

In Captain Plaskett's letter to his father on his arrival at Lisbon he speaks of his ability and knowledge of things pertaining to the sea, when, as a very young man, he was showing a business capacity rare, even in those days of young commanders, in one of his age.

The letter of Captain Plaskett to Mr. Holmes reporting the brig's arrival at Lisbon and the quaint wording of his commendation of the mate, his son, is worthy of attention and must have been a source of great gratification to his father, although he had two other sons, older and younger, of equal, if not greater ability, Alexander and Edward.

Lisbon, Quarantine, 3rd, Dec. 1826.

J. HOLMES, Esq.

Dear Sir:

We arrived last Tuesday the 28th after a long passage with constant easterly gales, 35 days after passing the Western Isles a distance ran in four or five days good wind. But I think all done their duty. Other vessels have had long passages as ourselves. Business appears dull and I cannot tell our future destination till I get Prattick. My cargo will pay a fair freight and if a return one can be procured she will pay her way. She has performed her passage without accident to herself although with constant side winds and deck load, she lay all under water to lee-ward. I am as well pleased with her qualities as

ever. The latter part of the passage, she leaked some but on arrival it subsided so it must be in her upper works and easily come at. My passage except in length has been pleasant. My officers good and temperate, crew quiet, no difficulty. Your son possesses more within than his exterior to a stranger might judge. He has strong powers of mind and takes hold of things at the right end. A rough exterior many times possesses a good heart, he is virtuous and temperate. I would sooner, notwithstanding his age, give him a vessel than one half the masters I have known.

My best wishes to you and to all the family, (and believe me, Sir), in true friendship I write it,

Yours truly,

Signed, J. W. PLASKETT.

The vessel did not go to New Orleans as the mate expected on leaving home, the voyage lasting the full eighteen months he had signed for.

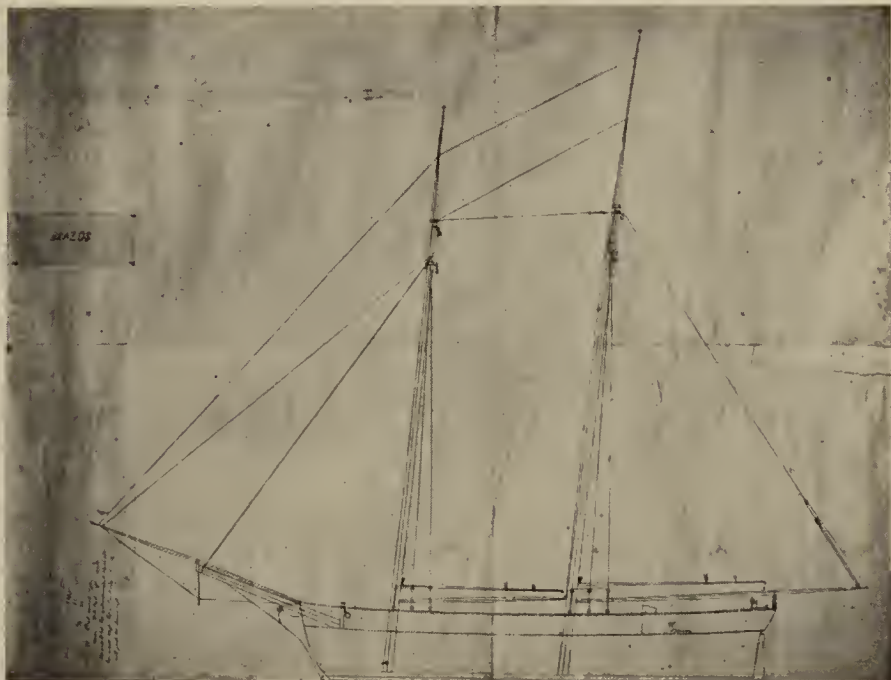
The next we hear of her is in a letter to Joseph Holmes from his son, dated September 8, 1827, from Chorillos, a little port near Callao, Peru. In this he gives an idea of what the conditions were in Peru at this time in the revolt of the Peruvians against Spain. The letter in part is:

HONOURED PARENT:

We lay at this dreadful place. We have discharged the best part of our cargo and been down to the island of San Lorenzo and ballasted our vessel. Took in two tons for the *General Brown*, a New York ship, that has been condemned for having Spanish property on board. She had 12 boxes of knives which were entered as knives, but they were very long I think more properly termed, swords. However, she is I think a lawful prize and I believe universally thought so, although a beautiful ship. She sailed from Gibraltar in company with us. It was reported that the Patriot cruisers were after her guns before she got under way but it appears nothing troubled her until she got round Cape Horn.

The Spanish general holds Callao as yet. How much longer he will hold out is uncertain. It makes it very hard for the shipping for at this place they are exposed to a very heavy swell although in a constant trade wind, for the place lays open to the

Pacific and bottom very foul so much so that we have had to purchase a chain, for which we pay the round sum of \$400.00.



SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF THE SCHOONER *Brazos* OF KINGSTON, 1841



CAPTAIN PARACLETE HOLMES

As to where we are going I hear some talking sometimes we are going to Panama to carry troops, at other times we are going to Valparaiso with troops, at other times we are going down the coast after a load of wood and thousands of other places too numerous to mention or sum them all up. I do not as yet know our future doom but I wish and hope that we shall come home where I can find you all enjoying good health and spirits, which is the sincere wish of your affectionate son.

Signed, PARACLETE HOLMES.

In this letter the mate speaks of their having to buy a chain. This was for a cable and at this time and for some years after, most of the cables used on merchant vessels were made of hemp, Russian hemp being the best. Oftentimes if the bottom of an anchorage was covered with rocks, or foul as it is called in the letter, the hemp cable would be chafed off, the vessel losing her anchor and going adrift, and if the weather was very bad be driven on shore and so lost. When chain cables became common no thought was ever given to the bottom of a harbor as to rocks, and few vessels were wrecked by the parting of their cables.

In addressing their letters to their father, Joseph Holmes, his sons show him the greatest respect, commencing them with "Honoured Sir" or "Respected Parent," and there was little said except what concerned the vessel or the business in hand.

At the present time this brig would be considered a very small vessel to make so long a voyage, but it was sometimes made in smaller ones and little was said of the hardships the officers and crews endured, confined for many months on board, in cramped quarters with a passage often greatly prolonged by head winds and bad weather.

One could wish more letters could have been found telling of her further proceedings on the South American coast and the voyage home. But no more is known, so it appears that soon after her return Joseph Holmes disposed of his interest.

This was the first vessel belonging to him to round Cape Horn and there is no record of any other, until 1850, when the ship *Raritan*, with the mate of the *Sophia and Eliza*, as master, went to San Francisco from Boston and return.

After Paraclete Holmes' return from the West Coast of South America, being then twenty-four years old, he was given his first command, the schooner *Pamela* of Kingston, 88 tons, built and owned by his father.

He writes home that the schooner sailed from New York, February 7, 1829, for Gibraltar and had a passage out of 29 days. Very bad weather for 12 days, had no sail set but a three-reefed foresail, but no damage done. From Gibraltar the vessel went to Malaga, loading for New York, where she arrived after a passage of 44 days. The freight money was \$1,000 for the voyage, cargo out being flour, with deck-load of staves, and she carried a crew of six men.

The pass or indenture issued by the United States Government for the vessel's voyage, signed by the President, John Quincy Adams, and Henry Clay, Secretary of State, is owned by Alexander Holmes of Kingston, and a picture of it is shown here.

This schooner was named for Joseph Holmes' daughter, Pamela, who afterward became the wife of the Honorable Joseph S. Beal of Kingston.

In 1828, Joseph Holmes launched the full-rigged brig *Roxana*, 137 tons, owning her with his oldest son, Alexander. Captain Paraclete, having given up the *Pamela*, took command of the new vessel and in the fall of 1829 sailed from Boston for Rio de Janeiro with



Aaron Brewster of Kingston, mate. Captain Holmes writes his father that he had a 65 days' passage to Rio with light winds and never took in a royal till up to Cape Frio. The vessel arrived back to Boston in the winter of 1829, and February 27, 1830, was at New Orleans from Boston after a very hard passage. April 3, 1830, the brig was bound to New York and was there May 7. Captain Holmes writes that he is offered \$4,000 for the brig and that she needs repairs. Not being sold he left, and the mate, Mr. Brewster, was made captain and the vessel repaired.

His next command was the ship *Helen Mar* of Kingston, as appears from a letter of instruction from John Fairfield, agent, in Boston, to Captain Paraclete Holmes of the ship *Helen Mar*, dated Boston, November 26, 1830. This ship was being used as a packet for freight and passengers between Boston and New Orleans, although owned in New York. Joseph Holmes, who built her in 1829, and owned her with his son, Alexander Holmes, having sold her. Captain Holmes, taking charge of her about this time, continued in her in the employ of her new owner. In those years a large business was done between these ports with a number of different packet lines and the competition was very keen. Captain Holmes' instructions were to look well after his ship so that she should be popular with passengers and shippers of freight. In Richard H. Dana's book, "Two Years Before the Mast," he says that August 20, 1834, six days out of Boston in the brig *Pilgrim*, bound to the west coast of North America, they spoke the ship *Helen Mar* of New York steering west, bound home, so at that time she was still owned in New York. It is not known how long he remained in the *Helen Mar*, but in January, 1835, he is at Charleston, S. C., master and part owner of his father's ship, *Rialto* of Kingston, with his brother Edward as mate, loaded with cotton and bound for Liverpool.

The *Rialto*, 459 tons, was new the year before and the largest vessel he had commanded up to this time. He remained master of this ship for several years, making many voyages from New Orleans and other southern ports to England and France, with cargoes of cotton and tobacco. In 1838, the *Rialto* is at Marseilles, and he writes that the ship is loaded with 300 tons of freight, 25 steerage passengers and 12 jackasses at \$60 each, bound to New Orleans. The date on the oil painting of the *Rialto*, 1838, shows that it was on this voyage to Marseilles that the picture was painted by Pelligrini. Dana, in his book, "Two Years Before the Mast," mentions another Kingston vessel besides the *Helen Mar* when he speaks of an English sailor whom he met when on the Californian coast in 1835 who had come to Boston from Liverpool in the ship *Rialto*, Captain Holmes, and then shipped in the *California* for the West Coast. For a short time in 1841 he was coasting in his father's schooner *September*, having given up the *Rialto* to William S. Adams of Kingston, who had been mate with him.

In 1843, he took command of the ship *Herculean* of Kingston, a larger vessel than the *Rialto* and built by his father in 1839. During the time he was in this ship he continued to make voyages to England and France from New Orleans and other ports in the south with the usual cargoes of cotton and tobacco. The return cargoes were coal, salt and iron with as many cabin and steerage passengers as could be accommodated. If freights were good in the South he returned there at once, oftentimes in ballast, for another cargo, otherwise he would charter for New York or Boston and then go South, where if freights were very low or could not be readily obtained, vessels were obliged to lie idle sometimes for a month or more.

April 12, 1844, he writes his father from New Orleans that business as to freights was very dull and at that time there were in New Orleans 180 ships besides barks, brigs and schooners too numerous to mention. In a sea journal kept by him while in the *Herculean* he says, "Jan. 5, 1846, sailed from Mobile with a cargo of cotton. After a very boisterous passage arrived at Havre Feb. 23rd, discharged cargo and took on a full complement of passengers, say 216, for New York and sailed March 12th in great confusion. Arrived at New York after a very rough and long passage of 55 days. Had two passengers die and one born, May 5, 1846. Am glad to see Sandy Hook as ever I was to see anything in my life." After



By the President of the United States of America

SUFFER the master and crew of the Steamer Pamela to pass with her Company Passengers Goods and Merchandise without any hindrance or molestation the said Steamer appearing by good testimony to be one or more of the Citizens of the United States and to have a home only

(Given) under my Hand and the Seal of the United States of America the day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty

By the President

Wm. A. R. Taylor

State of New York

Prothonotary



arriving in New York Captain Holmes left the *Herculean* and later joined the ship *Raritan* of Kingston. Letters to his father show that February 18, 1849, the *Raritan* was at Mobile, loaded for Liverpool, ready for sea. There was on board 1,800 bales of cotton weighing 923,054 pounds, and the freight was 1923 English pounds. In order to carry the largest number of bales possible each bale was compressed, as they called it, to make it smaller in loading. This and the stevedores' bill were the largest items; the compressing bill being \$1,033.35, and the stevedores' bill, \$788.75. There were lighterage bills of \$398, commissions procuring freight, \$495.44, and bills for smaller amounts, crew's advance wages, supplies, pilotage, etc., which made a total of \$3,306.11. The cotton bales were usually square sided, but sometimes, round, and in that case a higher freight was charged, as the round bales would not stow so closely, and fewer could be carried.

The expenses in port while loading a cargo of cotton amounted to quite a sum, and one loading would apply to all. Freight rates were higher or lower according to the demand for cotton in the foreign markets and the number of ships in port. The usual rates for cotton were from one-half to a cent a pound and on tobacco, thirty-two shillings and six pence per hogshead was a low price. London was a bad port to bring tobacco to for the consignees always made claims against the ship for damage to the tobacco hogsheads on account of close stowage and it was made hard for the captain to collect his freight money in full.

At New Orleans there was an additional expense in getting the ship to and from the sea by towing. The bar at the mouth of the river often caused delay in going to sea, if the ship were too deeply loaded, and then two steamers were required to pull the ship over the bar into deep water, as is to be seen from the towage bills. The size of the ships built by the Holmes from 400 to 600 tons seems to have been well adapted for the cotton trade from New Orleans. A larger ship with a greater draft of water would have been prevented from sailing if the river was at a low stage and so making the water on the bar very shoal. As it was, they had trouble in getting to sea. In Mobile and the other southern ports, the cargo in many cases was loaded from lighters, which really made the expenses in all these ports about the same.

February 11, 1850, she sailed from Boston bound for San Francisco, where she arrived the following July after a passage of 165 days. From San Francisco the ship went to Hausco, Chili, and sailed from there for Boston, February 14, 1851.

The cargo of the ship for San Francisco was brick, cement and lumber, and some private ventures. The lumber was consigned to various parties, but on the arrival of the vessel the market was overstocked and hardly money enough to pay the freight could be obtained for it. Several lots were left on Captain Holmes' hands, which he was obliged to sell at auction to get it out of the ship in order to pay the freight. The delay in discharging the lumber caused him to lose the sale of his bricks and cement which were in the bottom of the ship, and brought out on the ship's account. On reaching San Francisco the bricks were worth \$40 per 1,000, but when ready to be discharged the price had fallen so low that they were the same price in weight as ballast, which he would have had to buy when he sailed, so they were left on board.

The only Kingston, or as he says, Old Colony people that he saw in the town were Captain Theodore Cunningham, Captain Francis Jameson, Sylvanus Everson and Walter Bartlett. He speaks of some goods he brought on his own account which he sold at 100 per cent profit. Provisions were very high and all that could be spared were sold.

As in the case of all vessels arriving there at that time, the crew immediately left, but his officers remained by the ship and completed the voyage back to Boston. He speaks of them as excellent men. At this time such was the rush for the gold mines, vessels were often left by captains and officers as well as crews; in fact, abandoned. His letters are wholly about the business of the ship and make little mention of other affairs. All of his letters as to his many voyages are of the same type, a bare statement of facts; and a more detailed account of his passages and doings while in port would have been of much interest now, especially concerning the months spent in California. From his sea journal of this



voyage he seems to have had the average kind of passage to San Francisco, as made in vessels of that period that were not built for speed, like the later clipper ships, with the usual heavy seas and westerly gales encountered in rounding Cape Horn. He was twenty days from latitude  $50^{\circ}$  in the South Atlantic to latitude  $50^{\circ}$  in the South Pacific, or as they say from  $50^{\circ}$  to  $50^{\circ}$ , which is called rounding the Horn, Cape Horn being in  $55^{\circ}$  south latitude.

His sea journal, under date of May 1, 1850, says, "Moderate winds, N.W., steering by the wind to W.S.W., middle part, wind N.N.W., two A.M., passed Cape Horn, bright moonlight, ten miles distant, shortly after the wind shifted to W. and W.S.W., in a squall of snow and rain. Strong gale. Close reefed. Latter part under short sail. Close reefed maintopsail, reefed foresail, main spencer and forestaysail, heading south.

"May 2nd, Standing off and on shore as the wind inclined. Wind from the west, at times blowing heavy, in squalls of hail, snow and rain.

"May 3rd, Strong gale from the west. Steering by the wind in shore under close reefed topsails and reefed coursers. At noon bore ship to the southward. Cape Horn bearing N.N.W."

The journal for these three days gives a perfect description of Cape Horn weather, which a vessel seldom escapes, bound to the westward and it was not uncommon for a month or six weeks to be spent in making this passage. Captain Holmes, by keeping close to land, did not allow his ship in spite of head winds, to be blown far to the south and so encounter ice and still worse weather, as was the case of many of the earlier vessels in their passage round the Cape. He was one of those shipmasters who were fortunate never to meet with disaster, unless it was the loss of a few sails and spars. Considering the number of years he was in command at sea it seems as though Chance, as used by Joseph Conrad, in his book of that name, aided him as well as his own good judgment.

His letter to his father, reporting his arrival at San Francisco, is dated July 28, 1850. Under date of October 26, 1850, he again writes him: "We have got ready for sea at last and shall get there as soon as we can. I shall go direct I think to Valparaiso. I hope to get to sea tomorrow." The vessel sailed in ballast as no cargo could be had. Sailors' wages advanced while the cargo was being discharged, so when the ship finally sailed, they were paying men \$25 to \$30 per month and they were hard to ship at that price.

The next letter is from Valparaiso, Chile, dated January 3, 1851; in it the captain writes that he had engaged between 300 and 400 tons of copper at \$15 per ton for Boston for the Revere Copper Company, the vessel to load at Huasco, about 40 hours' sail down the coast from Valparaiso.

She sailed from this port of Huasco, February 14, 1851, and had light to moderate winds to latitude  $49^{\circ} 36'$  S., longitude  $82^{\circ} 12'$  W., which was reached March 7, 1851. From this point to Cape Horn there were strong gales from the N. and N.W. with a large sea, as Captain Holmes calls it. He records in his sea journal of this voyage that March 10th, 1851, commences with strong gales from N.W. At four A.M. wind shifted to W.N.W. and W. with tremendous gusts. Took in close reefed mizzen and maintopsails. Middle and latter part more moderate. Clear weather, Lat. by observation,  $56^{\circ} 30'$  S. and Long.  $73^{\circ} 30'$  W.

March 11th, 1851: Fresh winds and squalls of rain and snow. Steering E. by N. At nine A.M. saw *Diego Ramirez*. At noon, bore N.N.W.

March 12, 1851: Fresh winds steering N.E., by N.N.E. At six P.M. abreast of Cape Horn. Steered N.E. till two A.M., N.N.E. and N.E. by N. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. At daylight Statten Land ahead, steered N.E. At noon, east end bore North, distance, 18 miles. Very moderate and fine.

March 13th, 1851. Moderate winds from N.N.W. Steering by the wind, northward and eastward. Clear weather. Lat. observed,  $54^{\circ} 4'$  S. Long.  $61^{\circ} 31'$  W.

March 14, 1851: First part, wind from N.N.W. heading E.N.E. by the wind. At ten P.M. come up to N.E. by N. Midnight come N.N.E. and N. by E. Set studding-sails, main-royal. Lat. observed,  $52^{\circ} 19'$  S. Long.  $57^{\circ} 44'$  W. With favorable winds the ship was only nine days from  $50^{\circ}$  to  $50^{\circ}$  in going around Cape Horn to the eastward,



which was a good run considering she was deeply loaded. The passage around the Cape has been so often written about that little more need be said. Oftentimes a vessel bound west is obliged to be kept under short sail for many days, laboring against head seas and heavy gales, and while in this condition meeting a fleet sailing east, homeward bound with a fair wind, all sail set, with their crews lining the rails forward, and making signs of derision to their less fortunate mates, huddled in the lee of the forward house to escape the flying spray. It is said that sometimes an eastern passage is made in such good weather that the sailors go barefooted. The chart that Captain Holmes had on this voyage in the *Raritan* was the same one he had used when mate of the brig *Sophia and Eliza*, in 1826, on a voyage to Callao, Peru, and it is interesting to follow the track of these two vessels in the southern latitudes.

After a moderate passage from Lat. 50° south, the ship reached Boston the first part of May and was at once returned to the cotton-carrying trade. There is no record of any of the Holmes' fleet going to the west coast of North or South America, except the brig *Sophia and Eliza*, ship *Raritan*, and barks, *Egypt* and *Fruiterer*.

As there was no date of this letter and the number of days' passage was omitted it was probably written by Captain Holmes to his brother Alexander on board the *Raritan* at sea just before she made the port of San Francisco and forwarded on his arrival. The last entry in his journal of the voyage is July 28, 1850: "Light winds and foggy. At 10.00 A.M. saw the land. The land off San Francisco. 4.00 P.M. pilot came on board. At 8.00 P.M. anchored in harbor of San Francisco." This would date the letter July 28, 1850, and makes his passage 165 days from Boston. The letter reads:

St. Francisco.

MR. ALEXANDER HOLMES:

*Dear Brother.* For the benefit of all concerned I give a short narrative of our outward passage to this place and as you're the oldest, I address to you. We sailed from B—— as you know on the 11th Febr. with a fine fair wind which run us out clear of Georges Bank. On the 15th in the edge of the Gulph Stream — had a very heavy gale of wind from the Southern quarter which lasted about 12 hours blowing very heavy. It then gave up suddenly and exposed us to a very dangerous Seaway the ship entirely unmanageable from want of wind. One of our 300 gal. water casks got adrift and in its passage across deck pass'd over the Pig Pen killing 4 out of 8 of our pigs (something of a loss), also lost from the quarter a small boat. A good beginning you will say. But this is all the accident or damage we have meet with on the voyage. From this time we had excellent weather although the winds were not so favourable as I could have wished to the Equator. We reach'd this point in our passage 36 days from B——. We were now of course in the S.E. trade wind which proved moderate all the way across them. April 11th, got soundings on the Bank off the River Plate where we lay becalm'd for 2 days. We steared along the coast of Patagonia passing in side of the Falkland Islands. In fact I kept the coast close on board to Staten Land which place we pass'd on the 28th of April and hawled up for the Cape with very fine weather wind from W.N.W. to N.W. on the 1st May passed Cape Horn within 10 miles at 12 midnight. As bright a Moonlight night as I ever saw in my life. Spoke at the same time Ship *Rob Roy* Cap. Holt who sailed some time before us. On May 11th called ourselves far enough to the Westward to stear to the

North'wd which we did do for two days only, when the wind shifted to North & N.W. and there remained for 14 days. It was here I expected slants if not a fair wind this was a great pull back in our passage. It exhausted all my patience and not a small portion of my tobacco. On the 30th May saw and pass'd the Island of Juan Fernandes. I little thought 24 years ago that I should be here now.\* We now shap'd our course so as to pass the Equator 115 W. Long. abandoning all thoughts of touching anywhere short of our destination. After having excellent weather and winds cross'd the Equator at this point on 18th of June the S. E. wind continued with us to Lat. 10.00 North where we struck a vein of calms and baffling winds which lasted 8 days. We then took what I suppose was N. E. trades but very far North. I have as you will perceive given dates so that you can easily examine for your selves if you will our progress which on the whole has been slow. Our ship is deep and moves heavy but as good a Sea Vessel as I would wish to have. We of course have experienced some hard blowy weather it could not be expected that we should be at Sea for days without. In all of which she has behaved admirably. Tight, Staunch and Strong. Three very requisite qualitys in a Ship coming one of these Voyages.

My officers are all I could expect for Mr. Linnell I consider an excellent Man on such a Voyage he has many qualifications the best one, the faculty of getting along with Sailors without difficulty. I have thus given you a short narrative of our Voyage it seems most proper for its the only part yet perform'd thus far. I shall not at this time enter into any speculations of the future but conclude with

Signing Myself Res'pt Yours,

P. HOLMES.

\*This was when he was mate of brig *Sophia and Eliza* on a voyage to Callao, Peru.



Unfortunately, there are no plans or pictures of this ship. She was built at the Landing by Joseph Holmes, in 1843, and registered 492 tons. Edward Holmes appears in the Customs Records as the Master Carpenter in her construction and was part owner with his father and brother Alexander. As we have a picture of the *Herculean* built a few years before, she was probably of a similar design and the same plan may have answered for both. N. D. Drew's sheer and spar plans show that this was done in several cases for Joseph Holmes when building vessels that were of about the same size and to be used in the same trade.

Being unable to illustrate the story of the *Raritan* with her picture or plans her voyages cannot be told by themselves like those of the other ships whose pictures are shown in this book. For this reason I have given here the accounts of her California voyage and the first and last one before she was sold. The first one tells how the *Raritan* sailed from the bay directly for the south and not going to Boston for a final fitting out and shipping of crew, as was usually the custom.

This first voyage was to New Orleans in command of Captain Chase when Captain W. S. Adams of Kingston took her and Captain Chase took the *Rialto*. The letter that Captain Chase wrote to Joseph Holmes as to the ship's first voyage from Kingston to New Orleans is as follows:

New Orleans Dec. 21, 1843.

JOSEPH HOLMES, Esq.,

*Dear Sir:* You will undoubtedly remember that it was on the 2nd of this month that the good ship *Raritan* finally sailed from the Cow Yard, Plymouth Harbor. I have the pleasure of informing you that by 12 o'clock that day we had Cape Cod well under the lee quarter and soon afterward bore away to the south. Set studding sails below and aloft. We had a fine run off for 24 hours and began to anticipate having a good story to tell for the new ship when it suddenly fell calm and remained so for twelve hours, then breezed up from S. W. and in crossing the Gulf Stream with a strong wind from S. W. to W.S.W. we went several degrees to the eastward much out of our course. Here, all hopes of making a short passage were at an end.

The wind continued to veer from south to west blowing hard the most of the time, until the 9th, when it came round from the north.

Made Abeco on the 12th. Entered on the northern edge of the Bank at eleven A.M., on the 13th and dropped off the southern edge at half-past six the same evening. On the morning of the 14th at four o'clock made Double Headed Shot Key Light and Key West Lighthouse, the same day at noon. Past Sand Key Lighthouse at two P.M. and at eight o'clock the same evening saw the Torugas Light bearing N. by E. on the 17th lay becalmed for twenty-four hours within forty miles of the *Belize*. On the morning of the 18th, at four A.M. took a pilot on board and at three P.M. crossed the Bar at the Northeast Pass. At six the same evening came to anchor about three miles above

the *Belize* with wind from the west, 16 days from Kingston.

During the passage the ship behaved nobly. We only fell in with two vessels, one bark, and one brig, steering our course both of which we outsailed with ease. Her rate of sailing before the wind, without driving hard, was ten to twelve miles per hour, by the wind from seven to nine steered the easiest of any vessel I ever was in, an ordinary helmsman being able to keep her within half a point going ten knots, with the wind on the quarter. In stays she worked most beautifully. She not only came around well, in the common sense of the word, but she absolutely flew, never having got sternway in the four or five times we had occasion to tack her, and in crossing the bar her keel being within an inch or two of the bottom, the pilot declared she worked equal to a pilot boat.

On the 19th at noon, the wind being still ahead, I did not feel myself at liberty to refuse steam any longer not knowing the conditions in the city. We accordingly hitched on to a tow boat and arrived here last evening.

Your Son, Captain Paraclete and Captain Adams have been on board of the ship today, and the latter appears to be very much pleased with her and we shall exchange in the course of a day or so.

I have entered somewhat into particulars at the risk of being tedious but as the ship was new, I suppose a short account of how we got along would be acceptable.

I remain your Obedient Svt.

Signed, ISAIAH CHASE.

Captain Chase belonged in West Harwich, Mass., and was in Joseph Holmes' employ for a number of years. His account of his going to sea from Kingston, the new ship *Raritan's* hailing port, and his passage to New Orleans is quite interesting and shows the ship to have been a good sailor and well balanced as to model of hull and sail plan, and sustaining the reputation of the Holmes for turning out smart vessels.

She was highly spoken of at New Orleans on her arrival. She was 132 feet, 3½ inches long, 28 feet 6 inches wide and 14 feet 3 inches deep, and was valued at \$32,000 when she



sailed from Kingston ready for sea. May 26, 1844, she was at New Orleans together with the ships *Herculean* and *Rialto* of Kingston, all loading cotton.

The first part of January, 1854, the *Raritan* was at St. Thomas, West Indies, in distress. She was bound to New York from Cadiz with a very valuable and heavy cargo of wines and liquors. Captain Peter Hansen, master. In latitude of the Western Islands experienced a heavy gale, ship leaking badly, being overloaded, drawing 18½ feet aft. After constant pumping succeeded in reaching St. Thomas with four feet of water in the hold. While lying in harbor it required constant pumping by twelve men to keep her afloat. She discharged cargo and went into drydock and was calked and coppered at great expense. She arrived in New York in April, discharged her wines in good order, but, about thirty quarter casks were drank up at St. Thomas and the liquors were damaged. The ship being in bad shape for heavy cargoes she was sold May 1, 1854, for \$20,000.

The following letter from Captain Hansen to Joseph Holmes gives the account of his arrival at St. Thomas in distress.

St. Thomas, Jan. 8, 1854.

MR. JOSEPH HOLMES,

*Dear Sir:* It is with pain that I now perform the duty of informing you of the arrival of the ship *Raritan* here at St. Thomas in distress, leaking very badly. Having left Cadiz on the 22nd of November 1853 with a favorable wind I proceeded on my voyage with every prospect of success until December 1st being then in the vicinity of the Western Islands, where I experienced a very heavy gale from the N.W. and while lying to, sprung a leak which soon increased to a fearful extent.

Fearing that the ship would founder where she was, I determined to scud her, the wind having changed somewhat to the northward, and continued to scud her for three succeeding days before a very heavy N.N.W. and westerly gale with both pumps constantly going. It finally became moderate and pleasant but the leak still continued about the same.

Keeping both pumps constantly going, I now made a thorough examination of the ship's hold for the leak, but in vain. Not being able to find the leak, and both pumps constantly going in fine moderate weather, it was impossible to get the ship to New York at this season of the year, I therefore, deter-

mined to run for this place, and finally after being at sea for over thirty days with both pumps constantly going, sometimes with three to four feet of water in her hold I finally arrived at this port on the second of January 1854 with every one on board completely exhausted with hard pumping. You will perhaps be able to form a better idea of the extent of the leak when I tell you that since my arrival here at this port I am obliged to employ twelve men every day to keep her free although I have discharged about 250 tons cargo.

On the recommendation of Captain Allen, I have consigned the ship to J. F. Piniston who wrote you on my arrival as I was very much exhausted from pumping. There is no doubt in my mind that the leak is in the ship's bottom and that I shall have to discharge all of my cargo and take the ship on railway to caulk and recopper and my expenses here will amount to a fearful amount.

You can have but a faint idea of the trouble and difficulty that I experience in this place as the cholera is raging to a fearful extent, there being from fifty to sixty deaths daily and it is almost impossible to get anybody to work.

Signed, PETER HANSEN.

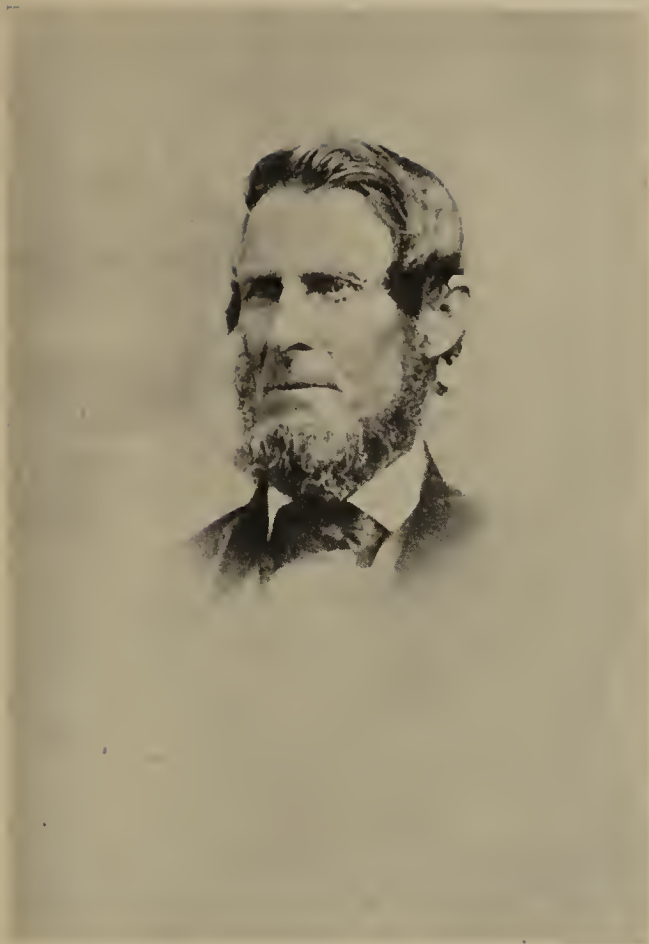
The *Raritan* was sold to Quebec for the lumber trade between there and England and cleared from New York for Quebec, May 23. Captain W. S. Adams writes Joseph Holmes from New York that the ship is in pretty good repair and could be used in the cotton trade some years, with a careful, prudent man in her; otherwise, she would run in debt every voyage. She was sold rather unexpectedly, for Captain Benjamin Cook of Kingston had come on from Kingston to New York to go in her as master, Captain Hansen thinking of retiring. Captain Adams acted for the owners in making the sale, being in New York to look out for the ship, as she had just arrived from St. Thomas after being repaired there. He also wrote Joseph Holmes that she had the heaviest cargo she had carried since she was built, vessel drawing 18½ feet aft, and seems to have blamed Captain Hansen for taking in so much cargo.

Owners of vessels often named them for members of their families, owners or friends, and Joseph Holmes and his sons followed this custom, as shown by the names of all of their sons and daughters appearing on record as names for some of their vessels. No other owner ever named vessels for each month as did Joseph Holmes. There is nothing to show why his ships were named *Rialto* and *Herculean*, but December 2, 1843, Captain William S. Adams writes Mr. Holmes he wishes the new ship called *Raritan*. As Joseph Holmes' larger



BRIG *Reindeer*, KINGSTON, E. G. WINSOR, MASTER





CAPTAIN ELBRIDGE G. WINSOR

vessels sometimes loaded cargoes of tobacco at Virginian ports this was probably the reason the ship was named *Raritan* from the Raritan River. Under the same date, Captain Adams also writes to Mr. Holmes to have a house on deck about 35 feet long for crew with a cook house in it as vessels are beginning to have crews' quarters in houses on deck. This was a great improvement over the old way of giving crews' quarters under the deck in the extreme forward end of a ship, which were always dark and wet. It also increased cargo space.

Captain Adams married Lucy Eveline, daughter of Joseph Holmes and he and his brother-in-law, Captain Paraclete Holmes, commanded the newest and largest ships belonging to Joseph Holmes and were of great assistance to him in the operation of his vessels on foreign voyages. In those days few letters from owners were received by those in command of their vessels after they once left home and usually the entire success of the voyage depended on the ability of the vessel's commander in securing freights that would be profitable to the owners. The other sons of Joseph Holmes, Alexander, Edward and Horace, assisted their father in

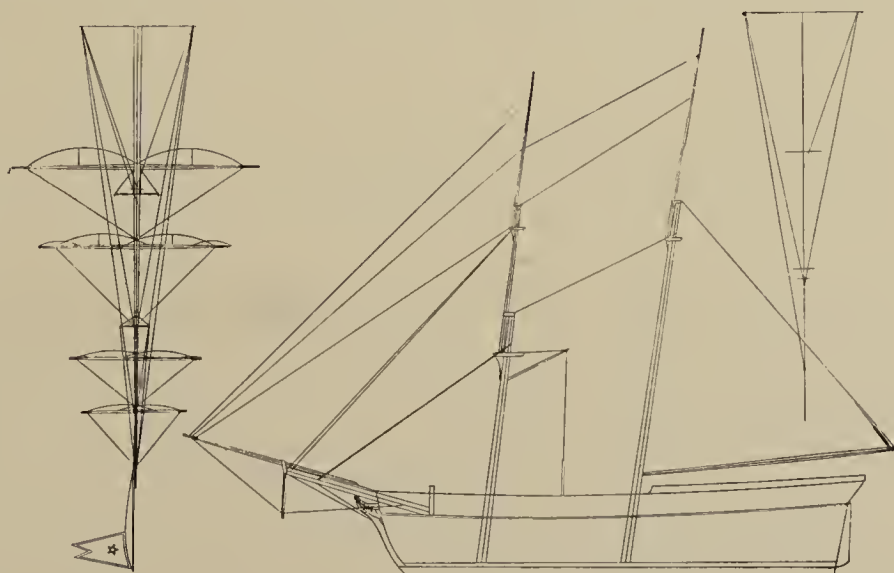
the building and management of his vessels at home, and he was most fortunate to have in his sons and son-in-law, men so able and well fitted to take charge of the various branches of his business, both at home and abroad, and his success in life was largely due to their untiring energy. Few, if any families in the country can show such a record of father and four sons engaged in business, especially in the building and owning of vessels for so many years.

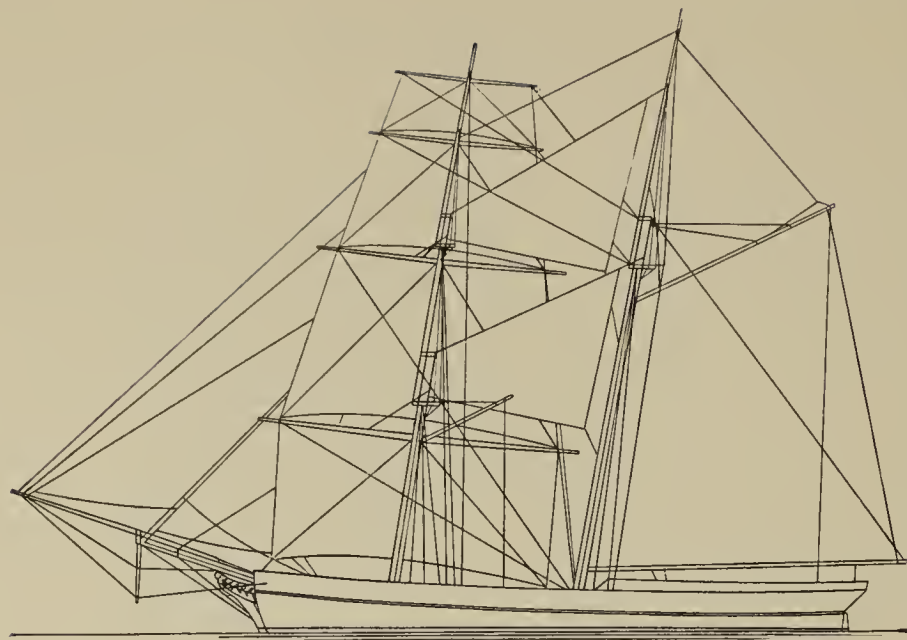
After Captain Holmes arrived in Boston in May, 1851, from the California voyage he does not appear again as master of any of the Kingston ships. He was forty-seven years old and probably gave up a seafaring life about this time. Later, he became president of the Warren Insurance Company of Boston, making his home at the Tremont House on Tremont Street, keeping his rooms there as long as he lived. He never married and lived with his father when in Kingston; on his father's death, in 1863, he came into possession of the homestead in the division of the property and retired from the presidency of the insurance company. After living there a few years he purchased the house built by Colonel John Sever, which he occupied until his death, in 1867, sixty-two years old.

He was always a most successful shipmaster and business man and well known in all of the large seaports of the eastern coast.

#### BRIG *Reindeer*

Brig *Reindeer* of Kingston, 136 tons, built at Kingston by Lysander Bartlett, Jr., in 1844; owned by Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano and Elbridge G. Winsor.

SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF BRIG *Gustavus* OF KINGSTON, 1846

SAIL PLAN OF BRIG *Gustavus* OF KINGSTON, 1846

## REMARKS

Her first master was Elbridge G. Winsor and Philander Cobb, mate. She was used for West India and Mediterranean voyages and in 1850 sold to San Francisco. She was a very smart vessel.

In the "Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian" Mr. Davis speaks of the sailing of the brig *Reindeer* for San Francisco. Dr. Samuel Merritt of Plymouth, who was a practicing physician in Plymouth, in 1849, was seized with the gold fever, and selling out his practice invested his capital in buying and loading the brig *Reindeer*, then lying in New

York. At this time the brig was still owned by her original owners and not by Joseph Holmes, as mentioned by Mr. Davis. Dr. Merritt secured a cargo that he thought could be easily disposed of in San Francisco, and with as many passengers as could be accommodated, sailed from New York in the summer of 1849, and after calling at Valparaiso, arrived in San Francisco that autumn when the vessel was sold and probably remained on the west coast.

## CAPTAIN ELBRIDGE G. WINSOR

This is the only picture of all of those sea captains who made their homes in Kingston at Rocky Nook that can be found today.

Captain Winsor was born in Duxbury in 1808, but lived in Rocky Nook for many years. The first that is known of him as commanding a Kingston vessel is in 1838 when he was in the schooner *Emerald*, John Sever, owner, on her first voyage. In 1844 he was captain of the brig *Reindeer* of Kingston, new, built by Lysander Bartlett, Jr., owning her with Benjamin and Joshua Delano. After she was sold in 1849 he was master of the bark *Grey Hound* built in Kingston in 1850, also owning her with the Delanos. The last vessel he was interested in was the schooner *Young Teaser* of Kingston, 126 tons, built at Fairhaven in 1860. Levi Morton, owning 2/16; Benjamin Delano, 4/16; George T. Adams, 2/16; Elbridge G. Winsor, 4/16, and Joshua Delano, 4/16. David Churchill was her first master and she was used for fishing and coasting and soon sold.

There is no record of his going in any vessel from here after giving up the bark *Grey Hound*, and the last part of his life was passed in Roslindale where he died in 1899.

BRIG *Gustavus*

Brig *Gustavus* of Kingston, 145 tons, built at Kingston in 1846, by Edward Holmes, master carpenter, and Joseph Holmes; owned by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes.

## REMARKS

The first voyage of the brig *Gustavus* was in 1846 from New York to Cork, Ireland, loaded with corn for the famine sufferers in that country, Captain Josephus Dawes, master. From Cork the brig went to Buenos Ayres and other South American ports. From there to Havana and Boston. Captain Dawes continuing in her as master for several years.

May 27, 1852, the vessel was at New York from South America, chartered for Lisbon and Malaga and back to New York, in command of Captain Ezra Snow of Orleans, his brother Joseph Snow being mate. The vessel was at Malaga that summer, for under date of September 30, 1852, Mrs. Joseph Snow writes Joseph Holmes that she has "no news since



the vessel arrived at Malaga and it's now four months and they did not expect to be gone but three months and we feel some anxious. Please write if you have any news of them."

The brig arrived in New York with a cargo of lead, 60 days' passage and sailed October 22, for Plymouth, Spooner's Wharf, or as it is now called, Plymouth Cordage Company, with thirty-five tons of hemp and fifty barrels of flour for Kingston. Vessel to be repaired.

July 11, 1853, Captain Snow writes Joseph Holmes from Aux Cayes, Haiti, that the *Gustavus* "arrived from Boston after a passage of twenty-three days of calm weather, our cargo is ready for Boston. It has been quite sickly here since I was here before. Sickness brought from St. Thomas. It has been mostly on board of the vessels, but there don't appear to be much now on the shipping, but some cases on shore. I hope we may be kept from sickness while here and return again in safety."

"Signed, EZRA SNOW."

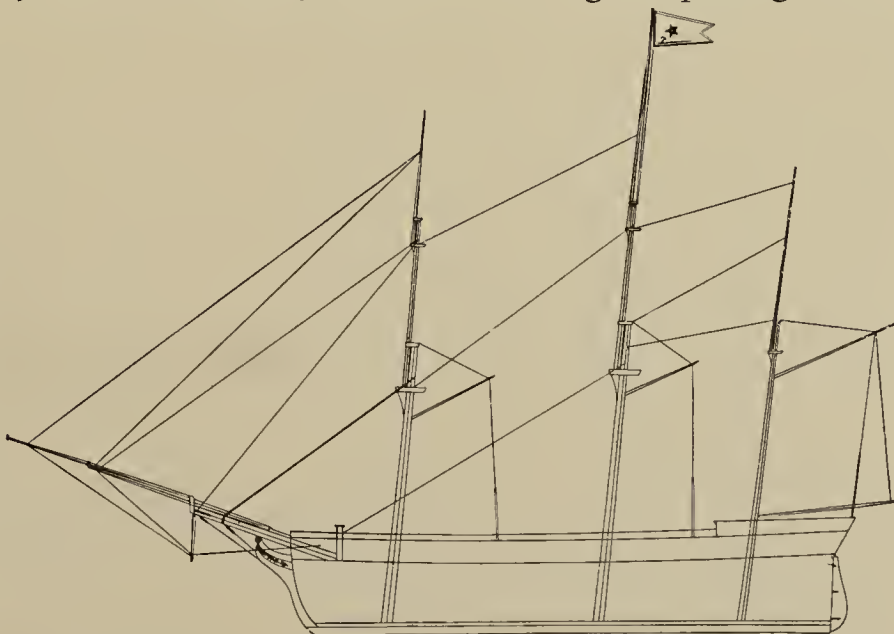
September 7, 1853, Captain Paraclete Holmes writes Joseph Holmes that he has arrived in New York and got permission from the doctor for the sailor who brought the brig in, to go on shore, and that Captain Snow died August 29, and that all of the crew have been more or less sick on the passage, the mate, Captain Snow's brother, also dead.

Until recent years yellow fever was very prevalent all through the West Indies and South American ports visited by American vessels, especially during the summer months, and vessels often lost all of their officers and crews while loading or waiting for cargo for the north, and new officers had to be sent out by the owners before the vessel could sail for home. Joseph Holmes sometimes received letters from his captains asking him not to charter the vessels they were in command of for certain West India ports on account of the sickness reported as being there. Sickness usually meant yellow fever, but the plague and cholera were common. Even now, after all these years, it is most pathetic to read Captain Snow's letter to Mr. Holmes in which he hopes, "we may be kept from sickness and return again in safety," for in a little more than a month's time, both he and his brother were dead.

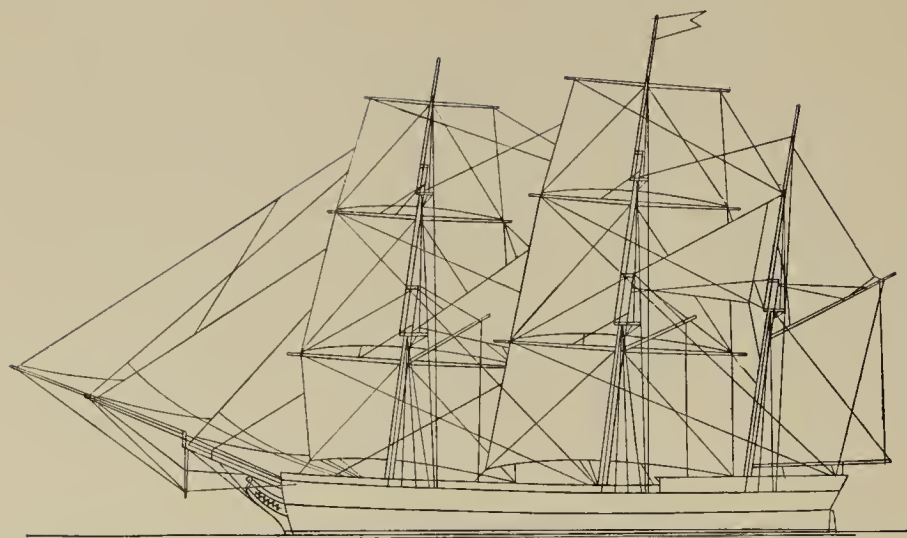
In charge of a new captain the brig proceeded to Boston and in January, 1854, she was reported at Nassau on a voyage from the West Indies to Boston, having been brought in by wreckers, captain, mate and all of the crew but one man, dead of yellow fever, vessel leaking and badly damaged in sails and rigging. The salvage paid to the wreckers was \$2,000. A new captain was sent on from home, the vessel partially repaired, and February 1, was at Charleston, S. C., leaking badly. Captain William S. Adams of Kingston went on to superintend further repairs and after discharging one-half of her cargo the leaks were stopped and the vessel continued on her voyage to Boston, the expenses at Charleston being \$879.

May 3, 1854, Captain Albert Holmes of Plymouth was in command and he writes Mr. Holmes on that date from Para, South America, that he had a good passage from Boston, 28 days to Ceara, a small place about 650 miles southeast of Para. Crossed the line in 20 days from Boston, in 31° W.

This run to the equator of twenty days from Boston by the brig *Gustavus* almost equals the runs made by the extreme clipper ships between the years 1850 and 1860 from New York to the equator when their best time was from seventeen to twenty days. New York is at least a day's sail nearer the equator than Boston and these clipper ships ten times as large as this little brig of only 145 tons. At sea, the larger



SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF BARK *Trueman* OF KINGSTON, 1846

SAIL PLAN OF BARK *Trueman* OF KINGSTON, 1846

Yard when he arrives and some men to unload her. He also says, "I do not like the brig as well as I expected." He finds much fault with the sails being so poor and he had to anchor after starting from Boston and go on shore for duck to repair them, losing one man by his running away, and in Baltimore, three more of the crew left; July 27 she was loaded and ready to sail.

September 21, 1854, the *Gustavus* left Salem, Mass., for Para and on November 17, Captain Percival writes Mr. Holmes that he got on shore on entering Para, badly damaging the vessel, losing anchors and chains and unhung rudder. After repairing Captain Percival writes again that his expenses on the brig have been about \$1,000 and that he was sailing December 18 for Turks Island in ballast for a cargo of salt.

On February 13, 1855, Captain Percival writes to Mr. Holmes from New York as follows:

MR. HOLMES:

*Sir:* I will inform you of the loss of your brig *Gustavus* after all of the difficulties which I have gone through, but was glad and ought to be thankful to come off without losing any of our number. I arrived at Turks Island on the 5th and not being able to find any salt, I took in ballast for Boston and cleared on the 6th, but the weather being very boisterous was detained until the 8th. Ten A.M. the gale increasing we broke our fluke off the anchor and before we could fetch her up we were off the bank, and about 12, noon, we came to again with both our anchors after losing some of our sails and boat and my foretopmast, but finding we were going on a reef and all hands in danger of losing our lives I had to slip both chains, but before I could get them clear she got on the reef when the sea made a clean breach over her. We could

not see the shore. At that time the next day they tried to get on board but they got their boat stove and gave it up. The sea getting lower through the day at low water about five P.M. we got on shore by wading where we found things comfortable.

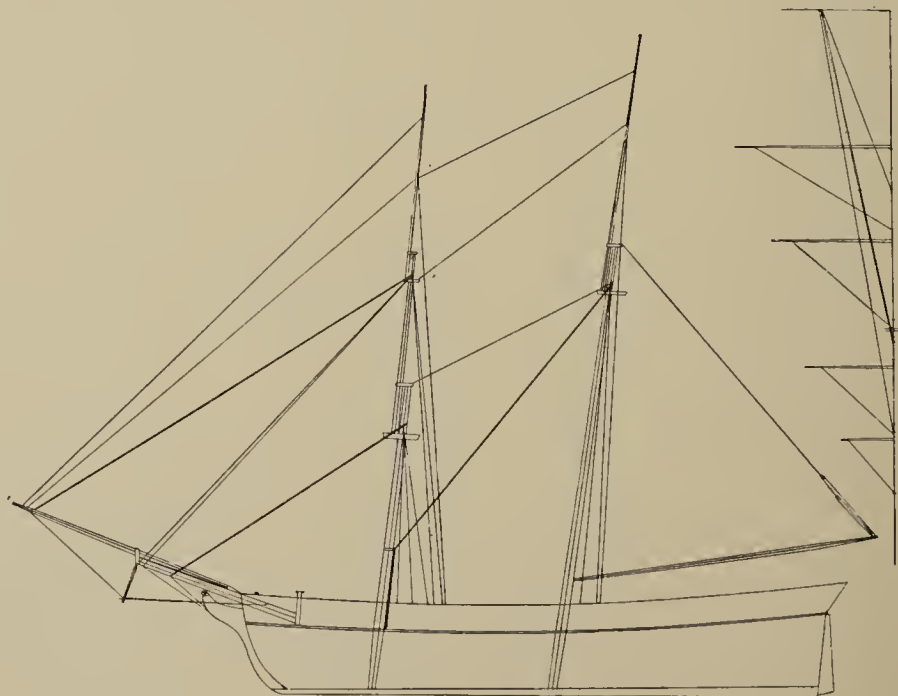
I stripped the brig after having a survey and sold sails and rigging at auction. The brig brought the sum of \$1000.00 and the expenses are about \$500.00. She is a total loss.

Signed, J. W. PERCIVAL.

The captain arrived in New York on a steamer by way of Bermuda, going to his home in Orleans, sick.

#### BARK *Trueman*

Bark *Trueman* of Kingston, 229 tons, built at Kingston by Nathaniel D. Drew, master carpenter, in 1846; owned by Alexander Holmes and Trueman Doane.

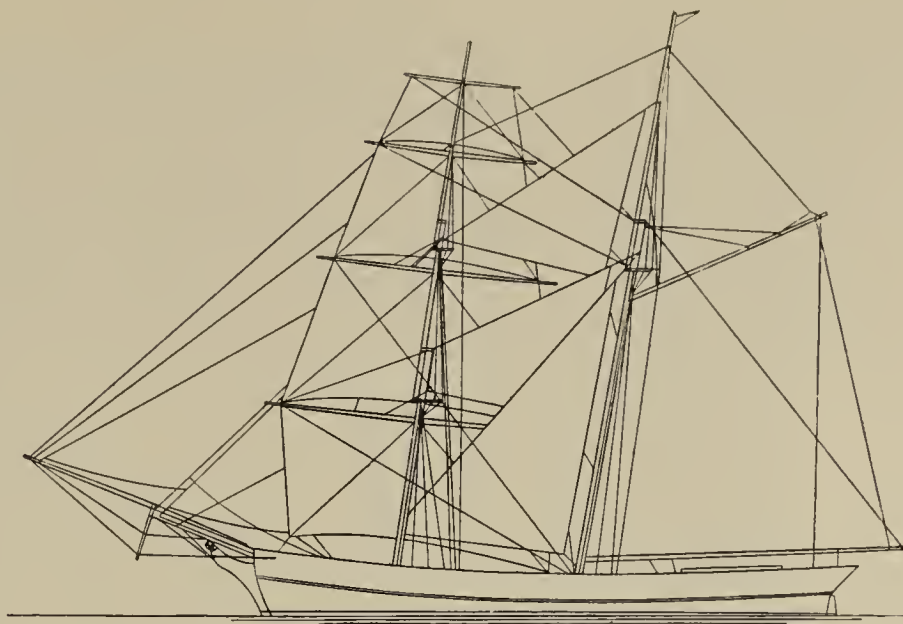
SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF BRIG *Monte Christo* OF KINGSTON, 1847



## REMARKS

She was named for Trueman Doane, one of her owners, who was also her first master, and was soon sold. William T. Davis of Plymouth, Mass., in his book "Plymouth Memories of an Octogenarian," speaks of being in Marseilles in 1846, going from there to Genoa and says:

On my way down the coast of the Mediterranean, a fellow passenger on the steamer, an Englishman, named James Buchanan was constantly boasting of the superiority of English vessels over all others. Of course I defended my own, nor was it difficult in those days at least to find fault with the squat sails, short topgallantmasts, clumsy blocks, poorly set up spars, and if at anchor with sails furled, the untidy bunts which often looked like bundles of rags on the yards of the Englishmen. As we came to anchor one morning in the harbor of Genoa, I pointed out to Mr. Buchanan a very trig looking bark anchored nearby, which had a familiar look.

SAIL PLAN OF BRIG *Monte Christo* OF KINGSTON, 1847

"She is tidy craft," said he, "and she will be English, of course." I knew better and calling a boatman directed him to row to the vessel. As we rowed round her stern I was not very much surprised to read, *Trueman* of Kingston, in hospitable letters. I had often seen the *Trueman*, Captain Doane, and I spent a pleasant hour with the captain in his cabin before going ashore.

BRIG *Monte Christo*

Brig *Monte Christo* of Kingston, 161 tons, built at Kingston by Lysander Bartlett, Jr., in 1847; owned by Benjamin Delano and Joshua Delano.

## REMARKS

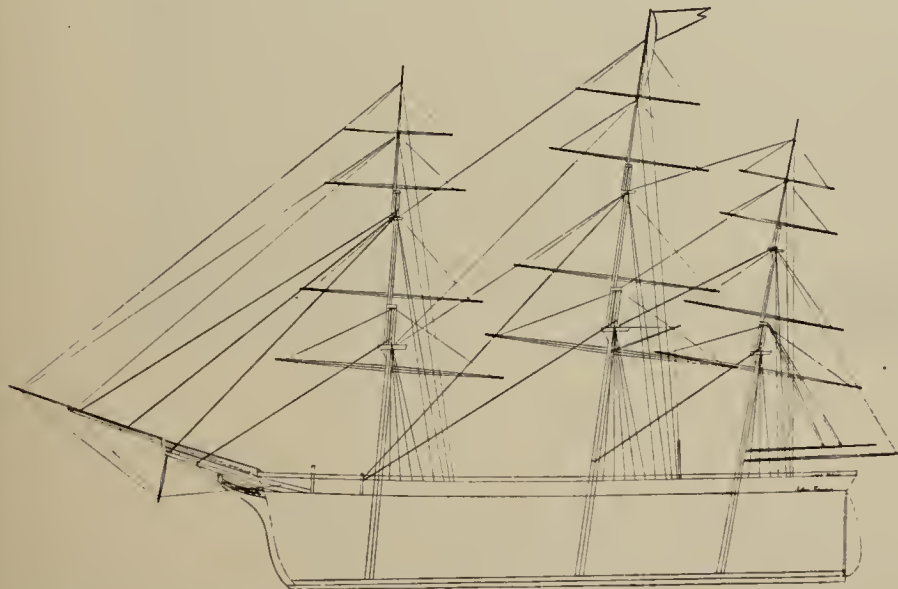
Captain James Fuller was first master and she was used for West India voyages, and sold soon after 1860.

SHIP *Nathan Hannau*

Ship *Nathan Hannau* of Kingston, 513 tons, built at Kingston, in 1848, by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes; owned by Joseph Holmes, Paraclete Holmes, William S. Adams, Edward Holmes and Horace Holmes.

## REMARKS

The *Nathan Hannau* was a fine ship and quite fast. She was 513 tons and was valued at \$36,000. Her dimensions were 136 feet 5 inches long, 28 feet 7 inches wide, and 14 feet 3 inches deep. Captain William S. Adams of Kingston, commanded her when new, and in 1851, when he left her to go in the ship *Joseph Holmes*, Captain Peter Hansen had her and he was succeeded by Captain J. W. Nickerson and later by Captain Ebenezer Pierce, who was in her when lost March 3, 1859. His account of her loss is that she struck just before daylight on a reef near Cape Florida, bound to New Orleans

SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF SHIP *Nathan Hannau* OF KINGSTON, 1848



STAFFORD OF KINGSTON JOHN DEARIE, ENTERING MILD



MODEL OF BARK *Stafford* OF KINGSTON, 1848

from Boston. She was off her course by four days' calms and strong currents when she struck; although calm at the time, the following night a strong breeze coming up it was found impossible to get her off and she filled and had to be abandoned to the Key West wreckers. Most of the cargo and ship's material were saved. Cargo was ice and furniture. Materials saved from ship, sails, etc., sold for \$1,670, and the cargo saved from the ship appraised at \$2,872 was taken to New Orleans, the wreckers getting 45 per cent after all expenses were paid. The vessel was insured. The captain who had been in her for some time felt her loss very much. She was always employed carrying cotton, tobacco and sugar from Southern ports to Europe, as were the other ships owned by Joseph Holmes, and was named for a merchant in New Orleans.

At one time Captain William E. Josselyn was in command and he writes Captain Paraclete Holmes that he has arrived at Trieste from New Orleans, July 3, 1854. He also says that "no vessel beat me." He was seventy-four days on the passage and was seventeen days in the Gulf of Venice. His mate has run away. The second mate and steward good, but the crew very bad. "Shall sail for Sicily as soon as possible to load salt for New Orleans. He closes his letter by saying, "I am wore out and I most lay sick. I had rather be mate with you at \$35 per month than to live in such misery." For several years he had been mate with Captain Paraclete Holmes on Joseph Holmes' ships.

September 1, 1854, he writes from Sicily that the *Nathan Hannau* sails for New Orleans tomorrow with 600 tons of salt, best quality, and seven or more passengers in house on deck, they to find themselves in everything. Adults paying \$20 and children half price. Very sickly here, cholera they say. The crew have been sick but all well at present, except rum sick.

February 27, 1853, Captain Josselyn writes from Havre that the ship is ready for sea, bound to New Orleans with 226 steerage passengers at \$11 per head. Oftentimes these ships returned to the United States in ballast or with small cargoes, and passengers helped quite a little to keep down expenses.

The Custom House measurements of the ships *Joseph Holmes* and *Nathan Hannau*, show these two ships to have been so near alike as to length and tonnage that the same spar plan answered for both as was done with several of the smaller vessels, saving the designer the labor of making a separate plan for each. Although only six feet longer, the *Joseph Holmes* had more breadth and depth in proportion to her length than the *Hannau*, and unless the *Hannau* had been found to be oversparred, it seems as though the *Joseph Holmes* could have carried a larger sail area.

#### BARK *Stafford*

Bark *Stafford* of Kingston, 205 tons, built at Kingston by Nathaniel D. Drew, master carpenter, in 1848; owned by Alexander Holmes.

#### REMARKS

This bark was built by Nathaniel D. Drew for Alexander Holmes in Mr. Holmes' building yard, or, as called, the upper yard; she was named for Stafford Sturtevant of Halifax, Mass.



BARQUE ANN & MARY - KINGSTON A. DAWES MASTER ENTERING PORT - PALERMO



All that is known about her is taken from an old diary kept at that period by Cornelius A. Bartlett of Kingston, Mass., a ship carpenter, and from a newspaper clipping. Mr. Bartlett writes that January and February, 1848, he was working on the bark *Stafford* in the upper yard for Nathaniel D. Drew, for seventy-five cents a day. Alexander Holmes, owner.

"December 1, 1848. Launched the bark *Stafford*."

"December 15, went down the river with her."

"December 21, went to the Cow Yard."

"December 22. A strong N.W. gale; the steamboat *R. B. Forbes* that took her to Boston lay alongside all day."

"December 23. Moderated and steamer took her to Boston. I stopped on board of her finishing some jobs till she sailed. Captain J. Searles, master, bound for Smyrna."

"Came home the 31st."

The newspaper item is from a New Bedford paper and shows that she was owned by J. and W. R. Wing of that city, in 1865, and used for a whaler.

On account of her sailing for Boston so soon after launching, it seems likely she was launched with masts in and fully rigged as was sometimes done if the owners were in a hurry to send the vessel to sea. In this case the hurry was probably due to fear that the river would freeze up because of the lateness of the season and the vessel be detained till spring. The steamer *R. B. Forbes* of Boston was a side wheel steamer and had been recently built and at that time was the most powerful towing steamer in the country. She was sold to the United States Government at the time of the Civil War, becoming part of the Navy.

#### BARK *Ann & Mary*

Bark *Ann & Mary* of Kingston, 242 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, master carpenter, in 1849; owned by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes.

#### REMARKS

The bark, *Ann & Mary*, was named Ann for the oldest daughter of Edward Holmes, and Mary for the daughter of his brother, Horace Holmes.

She was launched in 1849, and was first engaged in the Mediterranean fruit trade, commanded by Captain Allan Dawes of Duxbury. Captain Dawes was a most capable ship master, the oldest of the three Dawes brothers, who at one time were all sailing in Joseph Holmes' vessels as masters. To distinguish him from his other brothers he was called, by the Holmes', "The Dawes," and his sudden death in 1857 was a great loss to them.

In 1853, Captain Winslow Johnson, a son of Captain Francis Johnson of Kingston, was placed in command. He had previously been mate under Captain Dawes, the latter now taking charge of the new bark, *Fruiter*, of which he was a part owner with Joseph and Edward Holmes.

April 23, 1853, the vessel was at San Domingo city, seventeen days from Boston. Returning to Boston, she sailed for Rio Janeiro and from there to New Orleans, cargo coffee.

October 1, 1853, Captain Johnson, writing the owners from New Orleans as to his arrival, also says that, "expenses in port high. After five weeks in port I have secured a charter for the bark for \$650 per month, with privilege of continuing it for a year. I am now loaded with cotton for Genoa and sailing tonight. Have just money enough to pay my sailors' advance wages. I have sent home a small sum to keep my wife alive this winter."

They did not get to sea as expected, for October 12 he again writes, "I would have made a good voyage if I had gone north from Rio instead of coming to this eternal grave yard. I should have made quite a saving voyage but coming here spoiled it. Myself and mate have both had the yellow fever, but, thank God, have recovered and am getting tough and ready to try another voyage. My nurse's bill was \$5 a day. There were two captains and three mates buried here last week."

From Genoa the bark went to Palermo and was loaded for Boston January 21, 1854, ready for sea. From Boston she went to Rio Janeiro and loading coffee for New Orleans,



CAPTAIN ALLEN DAWES

she arrived there November 28, after a passage of fifty-three days from Rio.

December 22, 1854, Captain W. S. Adams, who was at New Orleans in Joseph Holmes' ship, *Nathan Hannau*, writes Mr. Holmes as follows: "I have to inform you of the death of Captain Johnson of the bark, *Ann & Mary*. He died this morning from an attack of cholera. I shall have his remains sent home in the bark. The *Ann & Mary* is nearly loaded for Boston and I shall try to get a good man to take charge of her."

Captain Adams writes Mr. Holmes, December 31, 1854, that "the *Ann & Mary* went down the river the evening of the 29th — John M. Page is master who I think is a good man, and the other's pay is his agreement. Captain Page has the chronometer and charter belonging to Captain Johnson and the mate has his clothes and some other things in his care which are to be delivered to his friends.

"The bark's cargo consists of 1690 bbls. of flour and 237 bbls. of molasses, something over \$9000 freight and primage. "Signed, W. S. ADAMS."

After her arrival in Boston it was decided to sell her, and February 13, 1855, she was offered to Brookhouse and Hunt of Salem for \$10,000 and they purchased her for that amount. From that time there is no further record of this vessel.

Captain Johnson did not live long to enjoy his first command. For many years New Orleans had been considered a very unhealthy city, cholera and yellow fever being very common. All of the cotton ship captains write of the sickness in the city, and as they sometimes remained there several months, waiting for cargoes or advance in freights, their letters show much anxiety as to health conditions on board the shipping.

#### CAPTAIN ALLEN DAWES

With the exception of Captain Paraclete Holmes and Captain William S. Adams, the three Dawes brothers sailed for Joseph Holmes the longest of any of his captains.

Captain Allen Dawes was the eldest, being born in Duxbury in 1812. Nothing can be found that connects him with any of the Holmes' vessels until 1838 when letters to her owner, Joseph Holmes, show him to be in command of the brig *Belize*, new, and on her first voyage. He continued in her for several years, and next appears as captain of the bark *Ann & Mary*, also new, in 1849, on voyages up the Mediterranean for fruit.

In 1853 he was master and part owner with Joseph Holmes and his son Edward, of the bark *Fruiter*, new, engaged in the same trade. In 1855, Joseph Holmes built the bark *Sicilian*, of which he and Edward Holmes were also part owners. Giving up the *Fruiter* to his brother, Captain Josephus, he took over the new bark and remained in her until his death in 1857.

The voyages of these three brothers in vessels owned by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes are so told in the "Remarks" on these vessels that nothing but a brief sketch of them can be given here.

#### SHIP *Joseph Holmes*

Ship *Joseph Holmes* of Kingston, 611 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes in 1851; owned by Joseph Holmes 8/16, William S. Adams 4/16, Edward Holmes 2/16, Paraclete Holmes 1/16, and Alexander Holmes 1/16.



## REMARKS

This was the largest vessel ever built in Kingston and her dimensions are of interest and were as follows: 141 feet 6 inches long, 35 feet 10 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches wide, and 15 feet 5 and 3/16 inches deep. She was valued by her owners, in 1851, November 28, as she lay in the Cow Yard (so called), Plymouth Harbor, with ballast and stores on board, at \$36,000. Captain William S. Adams of Kingston, master.

May 13, 1854, she was in New Orleans. Captain Josselyn and later Captain Peter Hansen had her. She was sold in 1860 for \$17,600, and soon after lost. She was registered in Kingston, Mass., December 1, 1851, Joseph S. Beal, Esq., Department collector.

She seems to have been a very successful vessel, making many voyages to England and Europe from southern ports and was one of the best sailers the Holmes' had for ships.

BARK *Messenger Bird*

Bark *Messenger Bird* of Kingston, 418 tons, built at Kingston by Nathaniel D. Drew, master carpenter, in 1852; owned by Alexander Holmes 1/8 and Trueman Doan 1/8, of Orleans.

## REMARKS

This vessel was built in the yard of Alexander Holmes, near the Poor House. C. A. Bartlett's diary under date of February 23, 1852, says that she was launched with the masts in and in launching after she left the ways, she fell over on her side and remained till the next day when she was righted and taken to the wharf below the railroad bridge. "She was a long legged craft and very crank and required a great deal of ballast" and they had a great deal of trouble in going down the river to Rocky Nook Wharf and getting down the bay.

The dimensions of this bark were: 120 feet long, 27 feet wide, and 13 feet 10 inches deep. Trueman Doane was her first master and she was later sold, although Joseph Holmes might have had a small interest in her in 1859, for in an old letter of May 3, that year, to Joseph Holmes, from an insurance company of New York, it says that they are informed that the bark *Messenger Bird*, which they understood was owned by him had arrived at Valparaiso, although bound to Hampton Roads, the captain having run away with the vessel and cargo. It has always been understood that the vessel was never recovered or the captain caught and that Joseph Holmes and Alexander, his son, had sold all their interest in the vessel before she was run away with.

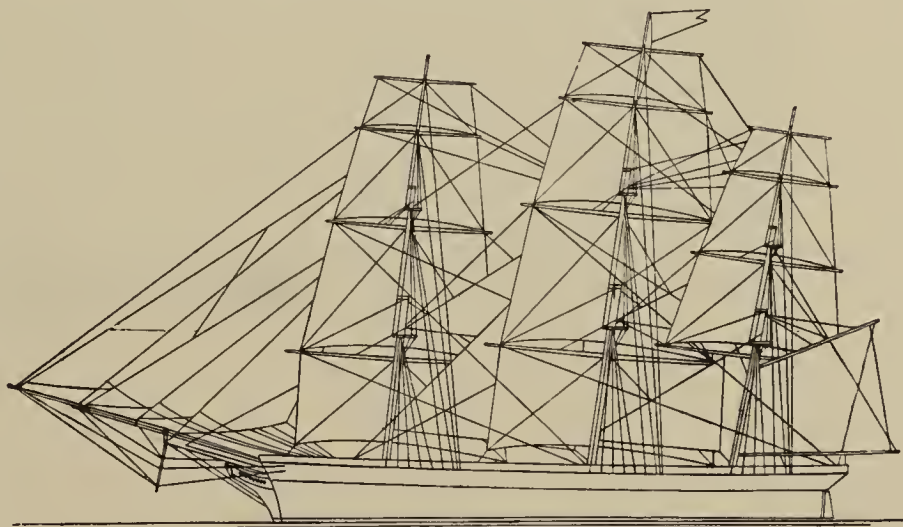
SCHOONER *Ocean Bird*

Schooner *Ocean Bird* of Kingston, 114 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, master carpenter, and Joseph Holmes, in 1852; owned by Joseph Holmes.

## REMARKS

The schooner *Ocean Bird* was used by the Holmes' many years, chiefly for freighting and voyages to West Indies and South America. She had many masters, at one time Captain Edwin Powers of Kingston, being in command.

January 12, 1854, she arrived at New York, Thomas Dodge, master, from Port au Prince, twenty-four days' passage; lost deck load, damaged sails, and crew all sick, only mate and one man able to do any work. In May, 1857, the schooner was at Para, Brazil, loaded for Salem, Captain Seth F. Bassett dead of yellow fever after four days' sickness. Vessel brought home by mate. She was finally



SAIL PLAN OF SHIP *Joseph Holmes* OF KINGSTON, 1851



*BARK Messenger Bird of KINGSTON, 1852*



sold. The following is Captain Bassett's last letter to Joseph Holmes and also the letter from the mate, David Nickerson, telling of Captain Bassett's death:

Para, Brazil, May 7, 1857.

MR. HOLMES,

*Respected Sir:* I take the first opportunity of informing you of our arrival without anything unusual occurring on our passage which was 32 days; rather a long passage, but considering our chances it did very well. I expect to leave for Salem in about ten days and the last of June you may expect us on the coast if nothing happens. It is quite healthy here at present and I hope it will remain so.

Signed, SETH F. BASSETT.

Sch. *Ocean Bird*, Salem June 17, 1857.

MR. HOLMES,

*Dear Sir:* The schooner *Ocean Bird* arrived at this port this morning without any material accident, except death of Captain Bassett. He died at Para, May 16th, of yellow fever after an illness of only four days. Since that time the command of the schooner has devolved upon me and I have acted in that capacity to the best of my judgment for the benefit of the voyage and all concerned. I hope to have your instructions at the earliest moment what to do with the schooner and how to proceed.

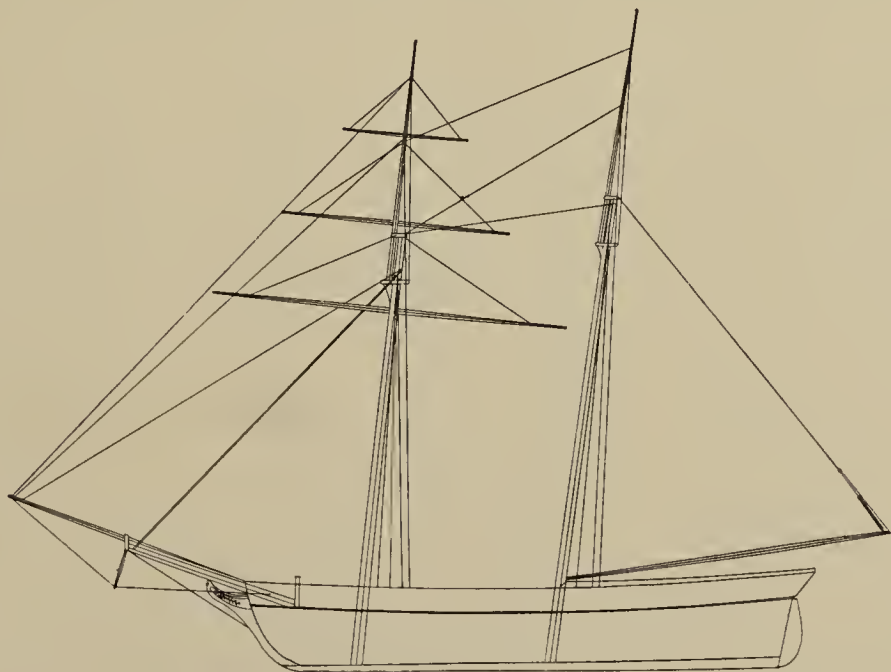
Yours obdt. servant, Signed, DAVID NICKERSON.

David Nickerson was the mate and after bringing the schooner to Salem, Mr. Holmes continued him in command.

In 1852, each of the building yards at the Landing, as it was then called, had a vessel on the stocks. Alexander Holmes, who then occupied the upper yard near the present Alms House, leasing it from John Drew, had the bark *Messenger Bird* building by Nathaniel D. Drew, master carpenter. Lysander Bartlett, Jr., was using his father's yard. This yard was some 200 yards up stream from the Railroad Bridge on land owned, in 1908, by Captain E. A. Ransom and H. M. Jones and later by Captain Ransom's heirs and Major George F. Sever, and called the middle yard. Here he was building the bark *White Wings* for the Delano's of Rocky Nook and others. Below the railroad bridge, at what is called the Landing today, Joseph Holmes and his son, Edward, were building in his yard the schooner *Ocean Bird*. The two upper yards above the bridge were soon to be given up, the master and other carpenters fortunately finding work with Joseph and Edward Holmes, who continued building vessels in spite of the gradual depression in this business, which by 1857, had assumed serious proportions throughout the country. At this time and later, the losses to builders and owners of shipping can be traced to various causes, the chief of which was the financial panic of 1857. Following this came the increasing number of steam vessels and the diverting of the ships employed in the California trade to foreign commerce. Then the Civil War and destruction of shipping by enemies' cruisers brought about still further loss, and the smaller yards where vessels were only built on orders were, one by one, abandoned for lack of work.

American ships, although faster, could not compete with those belonging to European countries. Their operating expenses were so low they secured much of the freight formerly carried in American bottoms. So from all these causes the sailing vessels as they became old or met disaster were not replaced and many years' supremacy on the seas was lost to American commerce never to be revived.

On the plan of the schooner *Bridgewater*, designed and built by N. D. Drew for Alexander Holmes, in 1844, was written the names of



SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF TOPSAIL SCHOONER *Ocean Bird* OF KINGSTON, 1852

schooners *Cosmos*, *Ocean Bird*, *Kingfisher* and *Clark Winsor*, these four being built at various times by Joseph Holmes, all being of a like rig and of about the same dimensions. One plan was used, as was done with the ships *Joseph Holmes* and *Nathan Hannau*. Because of the beauty of the name, *Ocean Bird*, for a vessel of this class, I have called the plan shown here that of the *Ocean Bird*.

#### SCHOONER *Cosmos*

Schooner *Cosmos* of Kingston, 110 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, master carpenter, and Joseph Holmes, in 1848; owned by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes.

#### REMARKS

This schooner was used for fishing, coasting and West India voyages several years. In December, 1853, she was at St. Thomas in distress, John Allen, master, and bound from Boston to Jacmel. She was hove down in a hurricane while under bare poles and had to cut away foremast, losing sails, jib-boom, etc. She was also commanded by Captain Albert Holmes, Plymouth, and S. O. Whitman, and sold at New York, 1860. The following is a letter to Joseph Holmes from Captain John Allen of Harwich, Mass., relating the disaster to the *Cosmos*.

St. Thomas, Dec. 6, 1853.  
JOSEPH HOLMES, Esq.,

*Dear Sir:* It is with feelings of deep regret and disappointment that I am compelled to acquaint you of my arrival at this port a perfect wreck. I experienced a tremendous hurricane on the night of the 24th of November in Latt.  $23^{\circ} - 40'$ , Long.  $69^{\circ} - 50'$  and whilst under bare poles the vessel was hove down on her beam ends and I cut away her foremast carrying with it main topmast, jib-boom and bowsprit in the cap and both jibs. She then came up and soon after the hurricane abated and on the morning of the 25th we hoisted out our boat and worked until night and with much difficulty we saved a broken jib-boom and

flying-jib and then made the best of our way to this port, where we arrived on the 3rd inst. I should have steered for Jacmel which I could have reached two days sooner but from my experience in the ports of San Domingo, it would have been impossible to have procured mast or rigging. I shall get repaired as soon and as cheap as possible and proceed to Jacmel. I hope to get away from here in a week. There are eight wrecks in here now, and a mast alone for the *Cosmos* costs \$300.00.

I have nothing more to say at present. I would to God these few lines were on a different theme.

Respectfully yours,

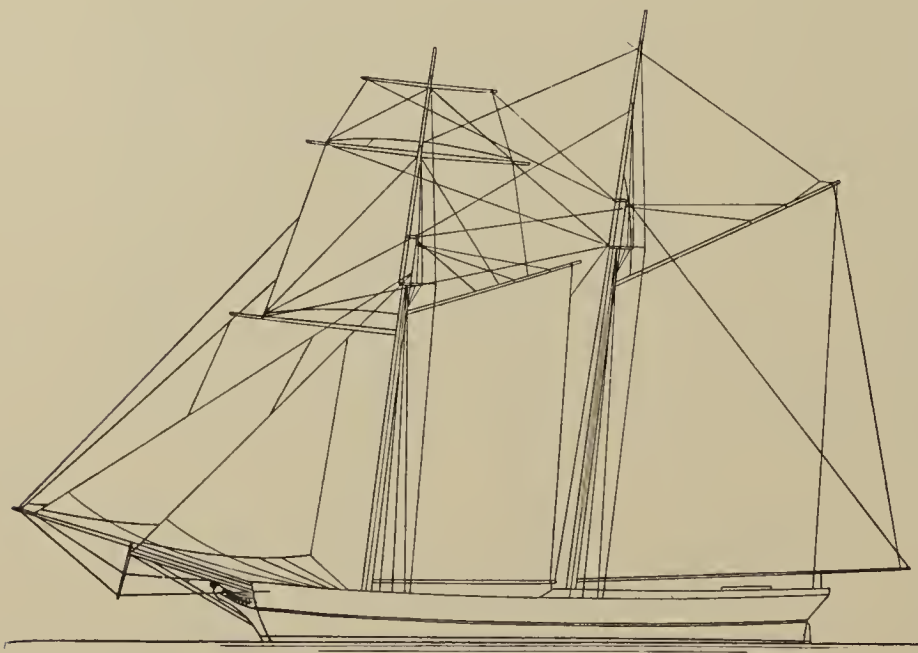
Signed, JOHN ALLEN.

Under date of December 24, 1853, Captain Allen again writes that he has completed his repairs on schooner *Cosmos* and "shall sail today for Jacmel. The whole amount of the repairs being \$1,734.15." In a postscript he writes, "Excuse my bad writing. I am not well."

He did not get to sea as expected; for January 8, 1854, the firm of Piniston and Company to whom the captain had consigned the *Cosmos* on arriving at St. Thomas, wrote Joseph

Holmes of Captain Allen's illness and also of the condition of the ship *Raritan*. The letter is as follows:

By request of Captain Allen of the *Cosmos* we have to advise his being detained here for the past 10 days owing to severe illness not only of himself but also the mate and two of the crew. We had them all brought ashore and all proper assistance and attention rendered them. Captain Allen, the mate and steward are somewhat better, although, still very weak, but in addition to Captain Allen's troubles he had the misfortune to lose his son yesterday, after a few days' illness. Captain Allen naturally feels very much disheartened both as to detention of the vessel and his own private griefs. He has also allowed the



SAIL PLAN OF TOPSAIL SCHOONER *Ocean Bird* OF KINGSTON, 1852



former to prey too much on his mind which has in some measure retarded his own recovery. We beg to say, however, in his behalf that he has done all that man could do towards dispatching matters and the vessel's detention has been all together beyond his control.

The prevalence of cholera here from which they are dying at the rate of 40 or 50 per day has put a stop to all business and it is a very difficult matter to obtain laborers here for the most trifling work. Cap-

tain Allen leaves this morning and has drawn on you 2 small drafts in favor of Cushing Stetson for \$70.55 and \$117.90, which we recommend to your protection. These two drafts are for expenses of himself and crew during sickness and burial of his son.

Yours very truly,

Signed, J. F. PINISTON & Co.

P.S.—The *Raritan* has commenced discharging and still requires constant pumping when lying still in the harbor.

The schooner proceeded on her voyage to Jacmel, loaded and sailed for Boston; March 7, she left Harwich, Mass., for Boston in command of Captain Smith, as Captain Allen was sick and had put into Harwich, his home, on that account and was not able to continue the voyage to Boston.

The year 1854 was a hard year for Joseph Holmes' vessels for he not only had the schooner *Cosmos* and ship *Raritan* in distress at St. Thomas at the same time in January, but the same month the brig *Gustavus* was at Charleston, S. C., in distress and the brig *August* was high and dry on the beach at Scituate harbor.

February 16, Captain Thomas Dodge of the schooner, *Ocean Bird*, writes Joseph Holmes that the schooner has been ashore on the Common Flats in Stage Harbor, Chatham. Carried on shore by ice while anchored, but was got off not much damaged by help from ashore and would continue on her voyage to Boston.

#### SCHOONER *Clark Winsor*

Schooner *Clark Winsor* of Kingston, 124 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, master carpenter, and Joseph Holmes, in 1850; owned by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes.

#### REMARKS

This schooner was used for West India voyages. From an old letter to Mr. Holmes from the captain of a vessel that lay alongside at Port au Prince, November 22, 1853, we find that Captain Percival of the *Clark Winsor* is sick on shore with yellow fever. Mate on board, drunk the whole 24 hours round, and had sold most of the provisions, and the vessel ready for sea. Later the mate was taken sick with the fever, as were all the crew. It was very sickly all through the West Indies in those days, many vessels losing their entire crews.

June 19, 1855, this vessel was lost on a reef at 3.30 A.M., twenty miles south of Inagua, bound from Gonaives to Boston, Captain F. M. Percival. She was carried out of her course by strong currents. The vessel soon filled and was a total loss. Captain and crew saved and taken to Inagua. The following is Captain Percival's letter giving the account of her loss:

Inagua, June 23rd, 1855.

JOSEPH HOLMES,

Sir, I have to inform you of the loss of your vessel, *Clark Winsor*, on the morning of June 19, 1855, at 3:30. Struck a reef on south side of the island of Inagua. Commenced heaving deck load over-board. At daylight found the vessel had bilged and breaking up fast; at 6.00 got out the boat and left the vessel with great difficulty and got here at 9.00.

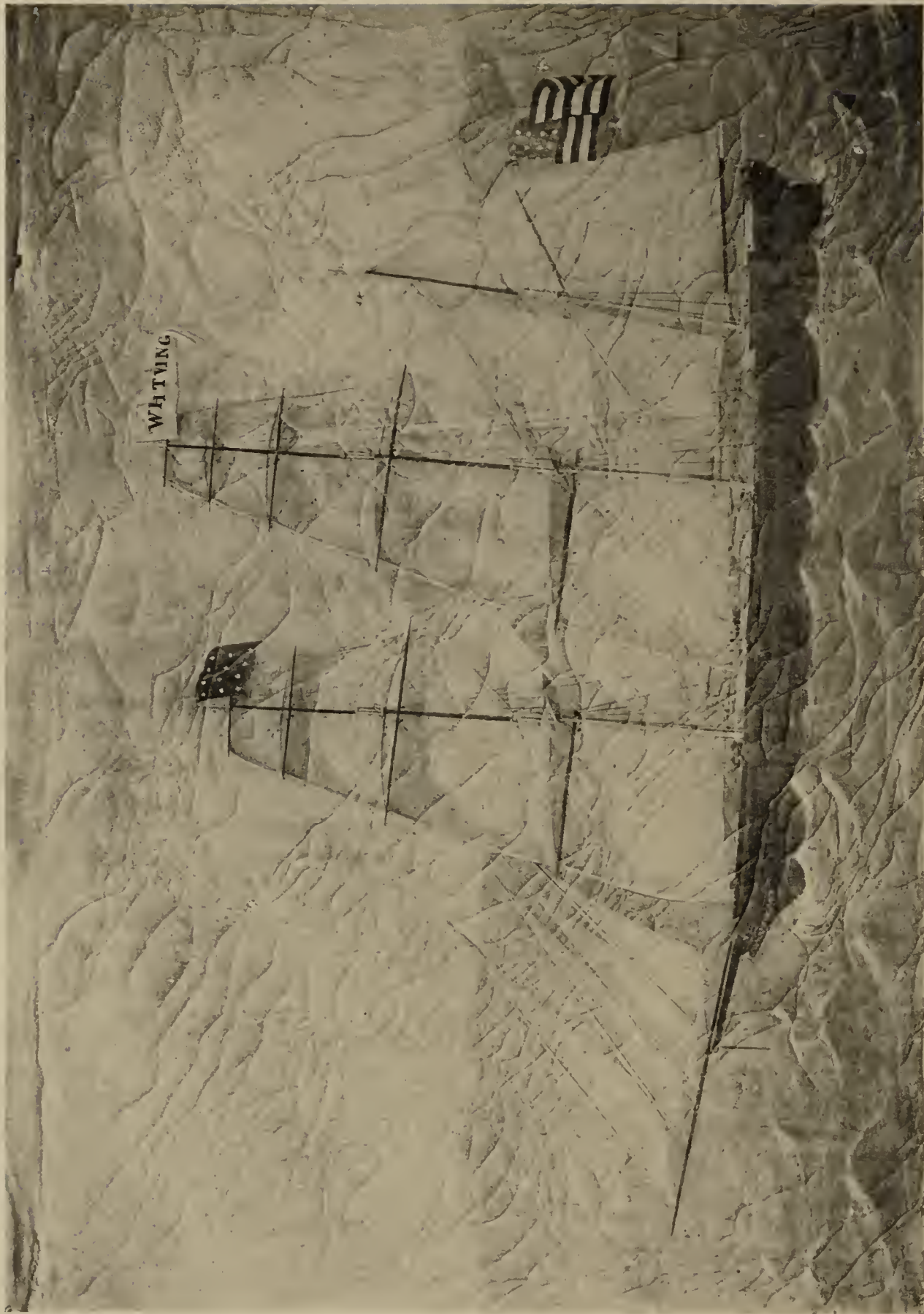
Left Gonaives the morning of the 17th and had

a good departure from St. Nicholas Mole. By the course steered judged ourselves 20 miles to the southwest of the island when she struck, where she now lays. They have got off some of the rigging and sails which will be sold next week. The salvage will be about 70%. I have been sick ever since we left Gonaives. The mate and crew will come in on a brig bound to Bangor next week, when I'll write you again.

Signed, F. M. PERCIVAL.

This vessel had several different captains, mostly men belonging to the Cape. Among them were the brothers J. W. and F. M. Percival, Stephen Ellis, Jr., and Albert Holmes of Plymouth.

She was registered at the Plymouth Custom House, the customs port of Kingston, as a schooner, but all letters speak of her as a brig, and she may have been rigged as a brig after her first voyage. She was a regular topsail schooner on the plans, which was often called a brig, and by so doing confusing the entirely different rigs. The topsail schooner had a foremast about as long as the mainmast with a fore and aft foresail, a foreyard, fore-



BARK *White Wings* OF KINGSTON, 1852



MODEL OF BARK *White Wings* OF KINGSTON, 1852

topsail yard and fore-topgallant yard. She seemed to have been used wholly for West India voyages and the square sails forward were a great help in shortening the passage with the fair wind of the northeast trades.

At this time the schooners engaged in the West India trade carried a yard on the fore-mast with a large square sail for use in fair winds, both yard and sail being hoisted aloft from the deck and when not in use lowered and yard stowed on deck. The schooner captains in writing to the owners sometimes say that they needed a square sail, that their voyage would have been accomplished in a much shorter time if the square sail had been on board, or that it could have been used. In the hurry of getting to sea it seems to have been forgotten or else found to be too poor to set. It was singular that in the space of four years three of Joseph Holmes' vessels were wrecked in the West Indies, less than one hundred miles from each other, and that the two that were lost in 1855 were commanded by the brothers Percival.

The names of these vessels were:

Brig *Edward Henry* lost January 11, 1851

Brig *Gustavus* lost February 8, 1855

Brig *Clark Winsor* lost June 19, 1855

#### SCHOONER *King Fisher*

Schooner *King Fisher* of Kingston, 120 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter, and Joseph Holmes, in 1853; owned by Joseph Holmes.

#### REMARKS

The schooner *King Fisher* was built in 1853 and owned by the Holmes' for many years, being sold a little after 1860. She was used mostly for coasting and West India voyages, but made some fishing voyages. In 1854 she was at Wilmington, N. C., for lumber, Captain, Albert Holmes of Plymouth. In 1856, at Pernambuco, Captain Ebenezer Pierce of Plymouth, bound to Baltimore. In 1857 fishing on the Grand Banks, Captain Otis Finney, Master. From this time until the vessels belonging to the Holmes' gave up Bank fishing, Captain Finney was continually employed by them as master of fishing vessels.

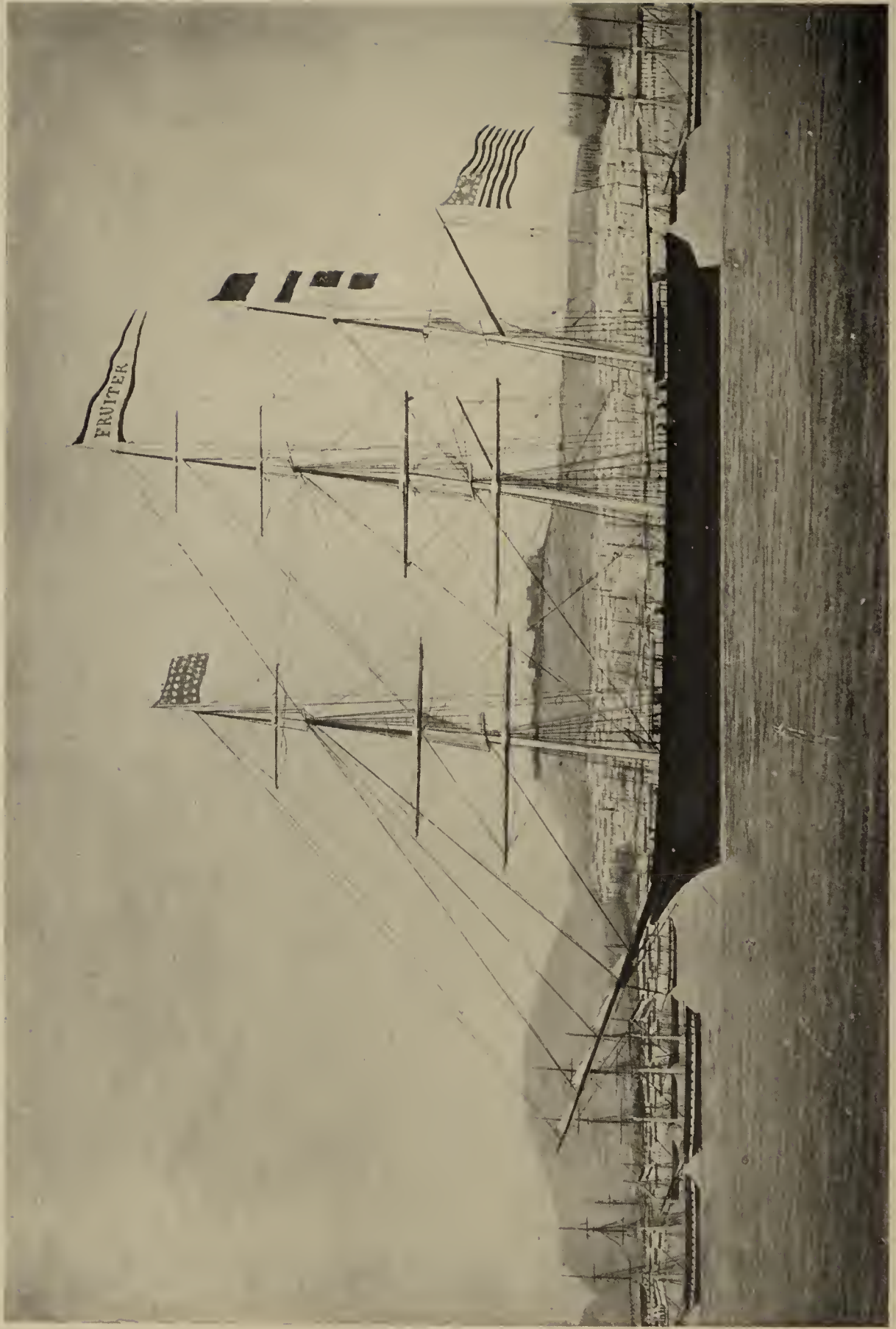
February 7, 1860, the schooner was chartered at New York for Barracoa, Cuba, for a cargo of fresh fruit by way of Savannah and back to New York, John T. Holmes, Master. She arrived in March with cargo in good condition. This was one of the first times, I think, that vessels brought cargoes of fruit north. Soon after this voyage the schooner was sold to Mattapoissett parties who used her for whaling. On a whaling voyage she was captured and burned March 23, 1863, near the equator, off the coast of Brazil by Captain Raphael Semmes, commanding the Confederate man-of-war, *Alabama*. At that time she carried a crew of twenty-three men.

#### BARK *White Wings*

Bark *White Wings* of Kingston, 293 tons, built at Kingston by Lysander Bartlett, Jr., in 1852; owned by Benjamin Delano, Joshua Delano, Freeman Sherman and Henry Pigeons.

#### REMARKS

She was soon sold.



BARK *Fruiter* OF KINGSTON AT ANCHOR, 1853



## LYSANDER BARTLETT

For over fifty years he and his father, Lysander Bartlett, senior, were engaged in ship building on Jones River in Kingston. As an account of their operations has already been given, little remains to be told. Their names appear in the lists of Kingston vessels as builders, but never as owners to any great extent, and when a vessel left their yards they had no further interests in her. The records in the Plymouth Custom House give the names of thirty-nine vessels, ships, barks, brigs, schooners and sloops which were built by the father and son.

Lysander Bartlett, senior, was a deacon in the Baptist Society of Kingston, and their yard, sometimes spoken of as the Middle Yard, was usually called Deacon Bartlett's yard, although leased from the Drews. On his death his son succeeded him in this office and became Deacon Bartlett. This title of Deacon like that of Captain for the master of a vessel was always used when addressing them, and it was considered very disrespectful to both to speak of them in a less formal manner.

His father lived in a house opposite to the entrance to the Alms House property which was burned a number of years ago, and he was born there, in 1805, dying at his home in Stony Brook, in 1890, eighty-five years old.

Several old models of vessels designed by him or his father are shown at the Bradford House in Kingston and a few of their pictures that were made for the owners, appear in this book.

The work done in their yard must have been very satisfactory to those they built for as the records show that most of them had a number of vessels constructed here, some of them remaining afloat many years. Two of these old ones were owned by the Delanos of Kingston: the schooner *Cordova*, built in 1835 and sold soon after 1882, forty-seven years old, and the schooner *King Philip*, built in 1845 and sold about the same time, thirty-seven years old. They were nearly of the same tonnage, the *King Philip* being of ninety-seven tons and the *Cordova*, ninety-three tons. Both were used for Bank fishing, coasting and West India voyages and the dimensions of the *Cordova* were 69 feet long, 18 feet wide and 8 feet deep, and these figures will apply to the *King Philip*. They were full bowed and had a white band around their hulls at the water ways, with painted ports, old style, masts raking well aft and bowsprits steeved very high, giving them a decidedly odd appearance alongside of the modern vessels. In spite of their size and model these schooners survived the perils and dangers of the sea when larger ones were never heard from, which speaks well for their seaworthiness and the quality of the work and material the Bartletts put into their vessels.

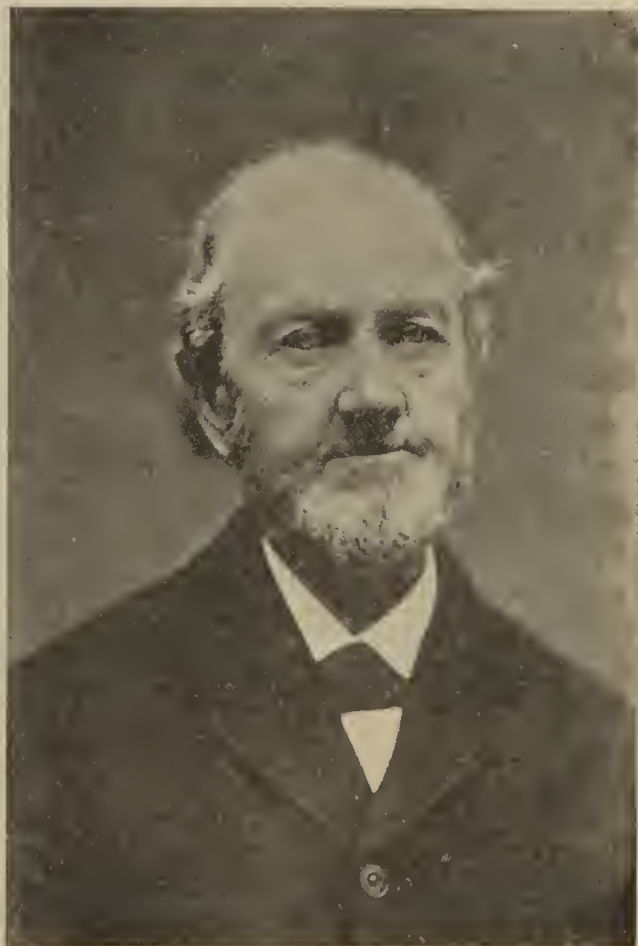
BARK *Fruiter*

Bark *Fruiter* of Kingston, 290 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, Master Carpenter, and Joseph Holmes, in 1853; owned by Joseph Holmes 6/8, Allen Dawes 1/8, and Edward Holmes 1/8.

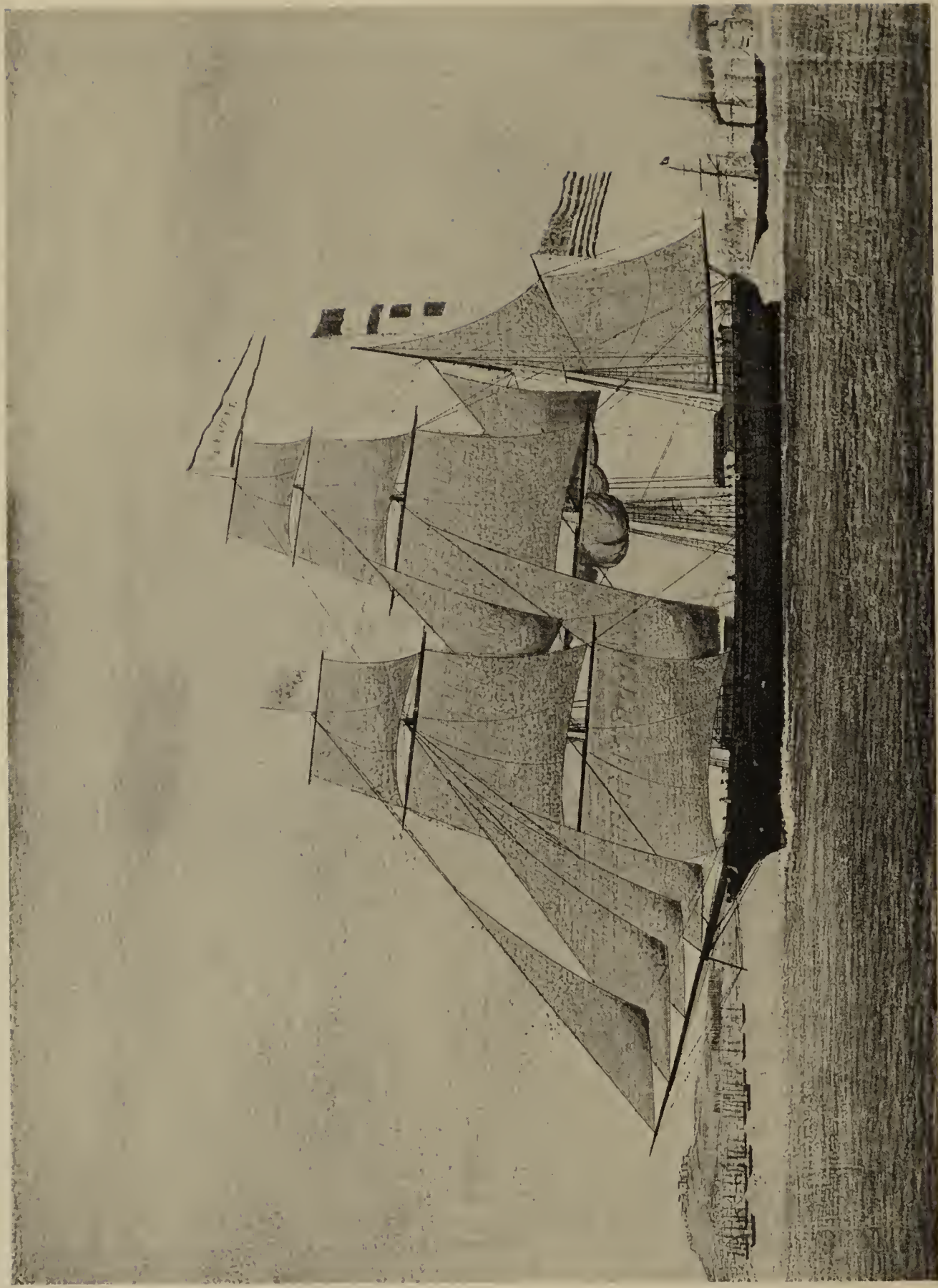
## REMARKS

This vessel was built for the Mediterranean fruit trade and was used in that trade most of the time while owned by the Holmes. Captain Allen Dawes was her first master, and later his brothers, Josephus and James H. Dawes, were in command.

In 1858, Captain Joseph A. Lavender had her,



LYSANDER BARTLETT, JR.



BARK *Fruiter* OF KINGSTON, 1853



and in 1859 she was under the command of Captain Andrew Burditt of Duxbury. She was sold in 1859 for \$10,000, having cost \$18,000 when new and ready for sea, July 4, 1853.

She was a very sharp vessel, noted for making fast passages in the fruit trade, and was painted green, and called "The Green Box." Captain Josephus Dawes says that he always tried to have a crew of Cape Ann fishermen in the winter, as they made the best sailors when it came to carrying sail and racing on the runs home with fruit, as it meant many dollars to the owner of the cargo if the vessel should get into port first, when several vessels were due to arrive about the same time.

In making these fruit voyages home, sail was always carried to the limit and many vessels in this trade were never heard from after passing Gibraltar, having probably been run under carrying sail. Most of these fruit vessels came into Boston, being small barks and a few brigs.

The Holmes' continued to have vessels in the trade till about 1863 and had besides the *Fruiter*, barks *Ann & Mary*, *Abby*, *Sicilian*, *Neapolitan* and *Fruiterer* and brig *Bird of the Wave*, all very fast and earning a great deal of money for the owners.

In March, 1859, the *Fruiter*, Captain Andrew Burditt of Duxbury, was at Wilmington, N. C., for Rio de Janeiro with a cargo of 160,000 feet of lumber, and the captain expects a forty-five days' passage. This was her last voyage while owned by the Holmes.



CAPTAIN JOSEPHUS DAWES

#### CAPTAIN JOSEPHUS DAWES

He was born in Duxbury, in 1820. His father was a sea captain and he went to sea with him when seven years old, and at ten, signed the ship's articles as a boy before the mast on a Bank fishing trip with his father. When he was twenty-one years old he was given the command of the schooner *September* of Kingston, belonging to Joseph Holmes, having sailed as mate with his brother, Captain Allen Dawes, in vessels belonging to Mr. Holmes.

Captain Dawes was always fond of telling how Joseph Holmes wanted him to go as captain of one of his vessels when he was only twenty and how he said to him, "Well, I think you had better wait until I am twenty-one and a man for myself."

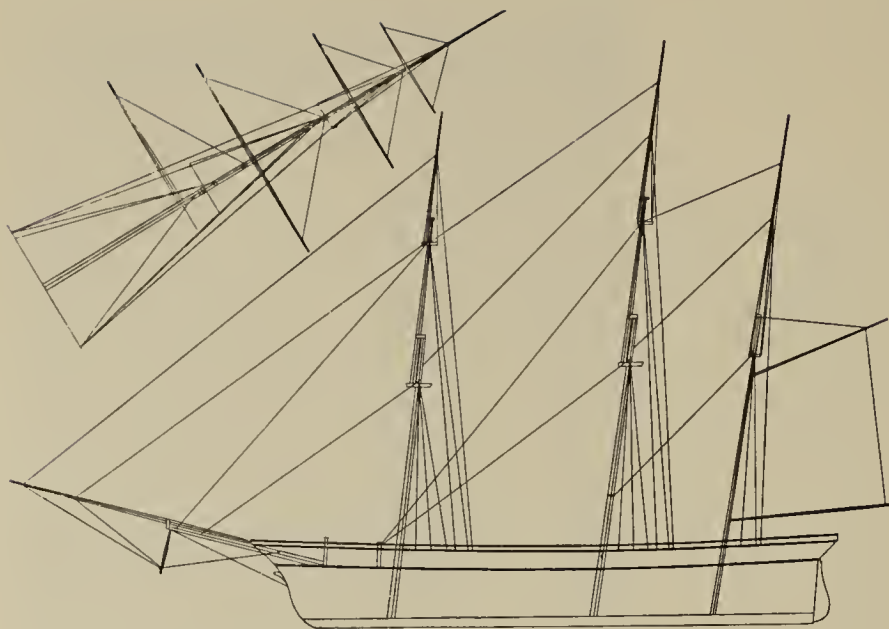
He continued in this schooner for a number of years, engaged in coasting and West India voyages, making many trips to Jacmel, Haiti and Porto Plata. On giving up the *September* he took charge of the new brig *Gustavus* of Kingston, in 1846, and the story of his voyages in her and the later fruit barks is told in the "Remarks" on these vessels, whose pictures are in this book.

He remained in Joseph Holmes' employ for nineteen years and was a most successful ship master for him. Although making very fast passages, his owners were never called upon to make good for any loss of sails or spars belonging to a vessel while in his charge.

His picture is from a photograph taken at about the time he gave up Joseph Holmes' employ. He died at Island Creek, Duxbury, in 1910, ninety years of age, a very active man up to the last and the only survivor of all the deep-water captains that lived here and once commanded vessels hailing from this port.

The bark *Fruiter* seemed to be a favorite with all of the Dawes brothers, not only as to speed, but weatherly qualities as well, and in their letters to Joseph Holmes, frequent



SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF BARK *Abby* OF KINGSTON, 1854

comparisons were made between her and the newer vessels. She was commanded by the three brothers in the order of their ages, and there are more pictures painted of her than of any other Kingston vessel.

Among the stories of the passages he made in the bark was one in which the captain said that oftentimes when he got through the Straits of Gibraltar the *Fruiter* would put her bow under water and they would never see it again until they made Boston Light.

This is much like the story told of the English tea clipper only in that case it was the lee rail that

was never seen from the time of discharging the pilot in China until the pilot came on board in the English Channel.

#### BARK *Abby*

Bark *Abby* of Kingston, 178 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes, in 1854; owned by Joseph Holmes.

#### REMARKS

This vessel was named *Abby* for Abby Bosworth Holmes, the daughter of Edward Holmes, and had for a figurehead a young girl with long, flowing hair. In those days girls were very proud to have a vessel named for them and it was always considered a great honor. As this vessel was soon lost the little that is known of her now comes from a few letters written by her captains to Joseph Holmes from the various ports she visited.

She appears to have been very fast, but could not always compete with the larger fruit barks in length of passage, especially during one of continuous heavy weather which was usually encountered in the North Atlantic ocean in winter on a voyage to or from European ports. The captains of these small vessels of the Holmes' drove them very hard and loaded them deep and their letters often show that there was great rivalry between them if bound to the same port as to who should be first to arrive.

But these vessels were well built and found, and commanded by able and experienced men, so when a loss did occur it was not through any fault of those in charge, weather conditions alone being responsible; a case of peril and danger of the sea. Many of the Holmes' captains remained in their employ from the time of their first command till they retired from the sea, being appointed to the new vessels as they were built and their old commands sold.

The bark *Abby* was launched in the fall of 1854 and her first voyage was from Boston to Constantinople in command of Captain J. W. Nickerson of Harwich, who continued in her as master till relieved by his brother, Augustus Nickerson. She arrived at Constantinople the first part of February, 1855, and under date of the 11th of that month Captain Nickerson writes Joseph Holmes that, "After a hard passage I have the privilege of writing informing you of our business. We had a very hard passage, severe weather from the Grand Bank to Minorca, winds from N.E. to E.S.E. and blowing a gale most part of the time. After making Cape Matapan took a gale, blowed me half way to Malta again. It has been a very severe winter on this coast. You will see by the papers I was obliged to throw over my deck load between the Grand Bank and Western Islands. The *Abby* is a fine sea vessel can be no better. We had a chance to try her. She sails well, carries her canvas well and no vessel has passed her this passage. I was some feared about her when I sailed from



Boston, after hearing so much said against her but after the first gale I saw how she behaved I felt safe. I arrived here on the 6th night. We have to go from here to Smyrna to load. The house here is good. I think I will accomplish my voyage in five months. You can look for me in that time unless they keep me over my lay days. I should have written by the other steamer but I was not able, my stomach felt so bad I could not. I hurt it very bad but it is getting better. I think I shall get away from here in ten days.

Yours respectfully,

Signed, J. W. NICKERSON.

March 8, 1855, Captain J. W. Nickerson writes Mr. Holmes from Smyrna. He says:

I left Constantinople February 23rd. Arrived at Smyrna March 2nd finding freights very dull. I expected to find the remainder of my cargo already when I arrived at Smyrna but got disappointed; we have freight enough I think engaged to fill us within eighty bales. I think as my lay days will be up by the time I get this in and freights so dull they will not keep me over so I shall sail on the 11th. The *Abby* will be in better trim when I leave Smyrna than when I left Boston. We had very severe weather out the

worst that I ever saw crossing the Atlantic. The *Abby* behaved well for the trim she was in and is a good sea vessel. I have had a good chance to try her.

The bark *Sultana* will leave here two or three days ahead of me for Boston. She is a clipper, 450 tons, so there will be a chance to try the sailing qualities of the *Abby*. You may look for me in five or six days after the *Sultana* arrives.

Yours respectfully,

Signed, J. W. NICKERSON.

We do not know how this race came out as no records are at hand as to their arrival in Boston. Captain J. W. Nickerson writes from Boston on May 31, 1855, that:

business is very dull at present here and no prospect of its being any better at present. I take the liberty of giving you my opinion about the *Abby*. I should think there was but a small chance of chartering her at present, unless we go to Port au Prince or some such place and if you think best to bring her home

after trying this week, if nothing offers, please write. I think in four or five weeks there will be some charters for the Mediterranean. If you think best to have her brought home please send one of the *Fruiter's* boats, as I have none.

Signed, J. W. NICKERSON.

This shows the bark had arrived previous to the date of the letter. In his letter from Smyrna the captain speaks of bales; these were bales of rags which formed a part or the whole of the cargo.

June 2, 1855, Captain J. W. Nickerson writes from Boston that he has

had offered for the *Abby* \$1300.00 to go from Boston to Aux Cayes, twenty lay days in Aux Cayes and thence back to Boston. I wish you would send me word Monday morning what I shall do and I would just say if Captain Dawes leaves the *Fruiter* I should be very glad to have her as the *Abby* is too small for hard times.

I made a deposit in the New England Bank of \$1800.00 to your account.

N. B. It is quite sickly in Aux Cayes by the accounts. I would come and see you but I have no one to keep ship. I am alone so I send this letter.

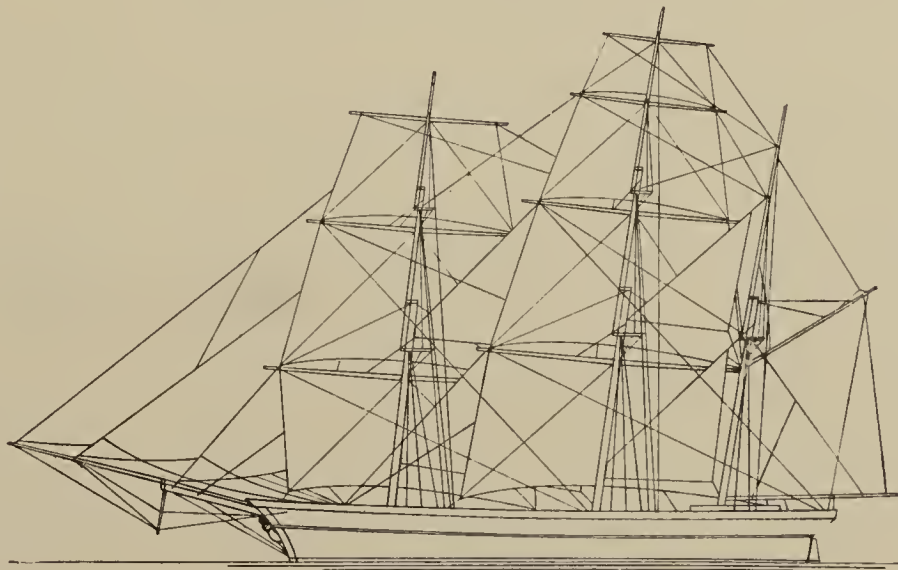
Signed, J. W. NICKERSON.

This charter for a West India voyage was not accepted and the next heard from the *Abby* is that she was at Smyrna, Captain J. W. Nickerson writing Joseph Holmes as follows:

Smyrna, Sept. 10th, 1855.

JOSEPH HOLMES, Esq.,

Dear Sir: I arrived at this port after a very moderate passage of sixty days. I shared about the fate that most of the rest did, a great deal of calm weather. The *Sea Bird* that sailed in company with me has not arrived yet. She passed the Rock of Gibraltar about the time I did, she was reported. I shall never try again to beat



SAIL PLAN OF BARK *Abby* OF KINGSTON, 1854

the *Fruiter* until I have something to compete with her. I never tried harder to beat a vessel than I have this voyage to beat the *Fruiter*, and I begin to think the harder a man tries the slower he gets along oftentimes. When I arrived and found she was there my

courage was all gone, long road that has no turn, I shall get away in about fifteen days from today, that is if things work favorable.

Yours most Obdt.,

Signed, J. W. NICKERSON.

The *Fruiter* spoken of by Captain Nickerson in his letter belonged to Joseph Holmes and was one, if not the fastest bark engaged in carrying fruit to Boston and New York from the Mediterranean and as she was nearly twice as large as the *Abby*, Captain Nickerson ought not to have expected to better the *Fruiter's* passage unless conditions were greatly in his favor.

A message by the Cape Cod *Telegraph* from Boston to Joseph Holmes, Kingston, dated December 25, 1855, reads, "The bark *Abby* has arrived," which shows she returned to Boston.

Captain James W. Nickerson now gave up the command of the *Abby* to his brother, Captain Augustus Nickerson of Harwich, and took command of Joseph Holmes' ship, *Nathan Hannau*, which was employed in the cotton trade.

On taking command of the bark, Joseph Holmes gave Captain Augustus Nickerson a letter of instructions or, as he called it, orders, as he was accustomed to do with all of his captains. His orders were very plain to understand, expressed in well-chosen words, and show him to have been a very religious man. They were signed by Mr. Holmes and the captain in duplicate. Those to Captain Nickerson are similar to all the others he wrote and on account of the language used I will give them in full.

Orders for Augustus Nickerson, Bark *Abby*, January 9th, 1856.

Kingston, 9th January 1856.

CAPTAIN AUGUSTUS NICKERSON,

*Dear Sir:* You being Master of the Bark *Abby*, of Kingston, now in the harbor of Boston and ready for sea and bound on a voyage from Boston to South America and back to Boston, under charter to Messrs. Cunningham & Co., Merchants of Boston, my instructions to you are, that you perform said voyage under the direction of the Messrs. Cunningham and back to Boston or New York. You will allow nothing taken on board your vessel that will make her liable to seizure in any Port you may visit during your voyage and cruise. You will manage the business of your vessel with all possible prudence and economy, remembering your vessel is not insured and expend nothing on her at

any time but what is necessary to keep her safe and seaworthy to return home. You will provide your vessel with good provisions but no ardent spirits, except for medicinal uses. You will write by every opportunity giving me an account of your welfare and business.

For your services, care and attention I agree to give you Forty Five Dollars wages per month, during said voyage.

Wishing you a pleasant and prosperous voyage I commit and commend you to the GOD\* of the winds and the waves, may His spirit attend to guide, to sustain and to bless and return in safety to your home and friends.

Signed, AUGUSTUS NICKERSON,  
JOSEPH HOLMES.

The bark was soon at sea again, bound to South America. Captain A. Nickerson in writing Joseph Holmes from Pernambuco, February 13, 1856, says:

I arrived here last night after a thirty-three days' passage without any mishap. I had one man frozen so badly the first night out he never got out of his berth afterwards. The first of February he died of the lockjaw so I had but two men all of the passage. I had one of the most severe gales I ever saw about a week out. Lay to under a mizzen-staysail forty-eight hours, most of the time with lee rail under water which drove me to the westward and lengthened my passage, being lighthanded,

etc. But she behaved as well as a vessel could. I have noted a protest and taken all necessary precautions.

Shall proceed towards Rio tonight.

Yours to command,

Signed, AUGUSTUS NICKERSON.

P. S. My brother thought he could make the passage in thirty-five days. Tell him if I come here again in the month of January with a full crew I will make it in twenty-five.

\*Joseph Holmes always spelt God with capital letters



The next letter reads:

MR. HOLMES, Rio de Janeiro, March 16, 1856.

*Dear Sir:* I am now ready for sea bound to New York. I intended to sail today but the runners stole two men and the cook from me last night.

I shall endeavor to procure men today and take steam out tomorrow as it is very expensive lying

here. It is also very sickly. My mate is sick and I am just so that I keep about. I shall send this by the brig *Fillmore*, bound to Baltimore, a very fast vessel. I beat her out but I am so deep that she may beat me on.

Yours &c.,

Signed, A. NICKERSON.

The bark arrived at New York about April 28, 1856. A letter of that date says:

MR. HOLMES,

*Sir,* I arrived here from Rio after a passage of thirty-eight days. I had a good passage up to the latitude of Bermuda and after that gales of wind and calms. Twenty-five days from Rio I was within five days' easy sail of New York. I was very deep

loaded coming on, drawing ten feet four inches aft and nine feet five inches forward. I think I can get a decent freight to go back to Rio again if it does not interfere with your calculations. I await your orders.

Yours,

Signed, A. NICKERSON.

The next letter of May 5, 1856 says:

MR. HOLMES, New York, May 5th, 1856.

*Sir,* Your favor came duly to hand. I commenced discharging today. The coffee is in pretty good order. There is some damage by leakage through the deck. When you write again please to state what arrangements you have made or shall make in relation to

settlement of the charter, etc., and also who is your man of business here, if you have any one in particular. I have obtained nothing certain as yet for the bark to do. Am to receive an answer this afternoon.

Yours &c.,

Signed, A. NICKERSON.

The bark was soon chartered for the West Indies and the captain writes again:

MR. HOLMES, New York, May 9th, 1856.

*Dear Sir,* I chartered the *Abby* to parties here yesterday to go to Cape Haytien with the privilege of Gonaives with twenty-five lay days. If I get away from there in less than that time \$10.00 per day for each day so saved to be subtracted from the charter, and if

I lie longer than that \$25.00 per day demurrage. I am to send a boat ashore at Cape Haytien for orders. If I discharge there I load there, if I proceed to Gonaives and discharge and return to Cape Haytien to load my passage from Gonaives to Haytien counts as lay days.

Yours &c., Signed, A. NICKERSON.

Again from New York Captain Nickerson writes May 14, 1856:

MR. HOLMES

*Sir,* The wind being ahead I shall not be able to sail today. As I cannot get all my bills together in time enough to draw money and pay them myself I shall approve them and send them to Messrs. J. O. Baker & Co. to be paid. I have of them \$231.47. I shall try and

get away tomorrow if possible. As you are aware I have very low wages. If I accomplish this voyage to your satisfaction I think you should pay me Sixty Dollars per month.

I remain &c.,

Signed, A. NICKERSON.

Evidently Captain Nickerson did not get to sea as soon as he expected for a letter from his agents dated New York, May 22, 1856, to Joseph Holmes, says:

We enclose our account of cash advanced Bark *Abby* showing amount due us of \$766.10 which you can remit to us. We also send vouchers. The bark we believe went to sea Tuesday last, having been detained by

some trouble with the crew. Not serious, we believe.

We remain with much regard,

Yours truly

Signed, J. O. BAKER & Co.

Vessels often had trouble with their crews getting drunk or running away if obliged to remain in port any length of time after they were shipped. Having received a month's advance pay and spent it they were always ready to leave if there was a possible chance and try for another ship with the customary advance wages. We do not know when the *Abby* reached Gonaives, but a letter to Mr. Holmes from there says:

MR. HOLMES, Gonaives, June 24, 1856.

*Sir,* I am now lying here about three quarters loaded. It is very sickly here. One American brig is lying here ready to sail the last four days. All hands sick aboard of her. Sickness is very expensive here as they will not allow you to have a man die on board under a penalty. I have one man on shore sick now

and I have been sick myself but am some better now. I have had two men sick. Have had to hire men to get my cargo on board. I shall probably sail within a week or ten days. I shall sail when I get loaded if there is no one well on board but my mate and myself.

Yours &c.,

Signed, A. NICKERSON.

Many times vessels have left West Indian or South American ports with crews sick, men from on shore or from other vessels helping to make sail and work them out of the harbor. They thought if they once got to sea the crew would soon get well. This usually happened, but sometimes they died, leaving the vessel very short handed and then she was fortunate if able to make port without assistance and escape a bill for salvage for a large amount as was the case of the brig *Gustavus* a few years before, when she was reported at Nassau with her captain, mate and crew all dead but one man, having been brought in by wreckers.

The *Abby* reached New York after a moderate passage. The letter telling of her arrival is this:

New York, July 15, 1856. charge in quarantine. Have no time to write more.  
MR. HOLMES: Signed, Yours A. N.  
Sir: I have arrived here today. Have got to dis- P. S. Lost one man and had one sick on the passage.

July 17th, Captain Nickerson writes again:

New York, July 17, 1856. just got well enough to attend to my business. I  
MR. HOLMES: am still very weak. I have chartered the bark *Abby*  
Sir, I left Gonaives the first day of July with one to go to Malaga and back with thirty lay days there  
man sick besides myself. Three days out another for \$2100.00.  
man was taken sick and died; then my steward was Yours &c.,  
taken sick but recovered before I arrived. I have Signed, A. NICKERSON.

The following is the last letter that can be found in Joseph Holmes' letter files from Captain Augustus Nickerson of Harwich, Mass., master of the bark *Abby* of Kingston, Mass.

New York, July 22, 1856. in New York. A vessel of 275 tons was chartered  
MR. HOLMES, here yesterday to go to Palermo with thirty-five lay  
Sir, I received yours of the 20th, this morning. days for \$3000.00. That is a month's longer voyage  
I am very sorry that I have not succeeded in satisfy- than mine. I consider mine a three and one-half  
ing you in regard to the charter of the bark. I did month's voyage.  
not receive your letter until two days after I had Yours,  
chartered. It is a very good charter for the times Signed, A. NICKERSON.

This proved to be the *Abby's* last voyage. From a letter from Nantucket to Joseph Holmes, we find she sailed from New York the first part of August, arriving in Malaga, September 10, 1856. She was never heard from after leaving Malaga. Lost with all hands. A copy of a letter from Joseph Holmes to J. O. Baker and Co., New York, dated January 20, 1857, says:

Dear Sirs: I enclose a charter party of the bark to call on Messrs. Howes and Co., and ask them to  
*Abby* to Messrs. Howes and Co., of your city for a settle for the outward freight etc. Your compliance  
voyage to Malaga and back to New York. She is will much oblige,  
probably lost. Her charter was half due on arrival Your friend and humble servant,  
at Malaga as you will see by document. I wish you JOSEPH HOLMES.

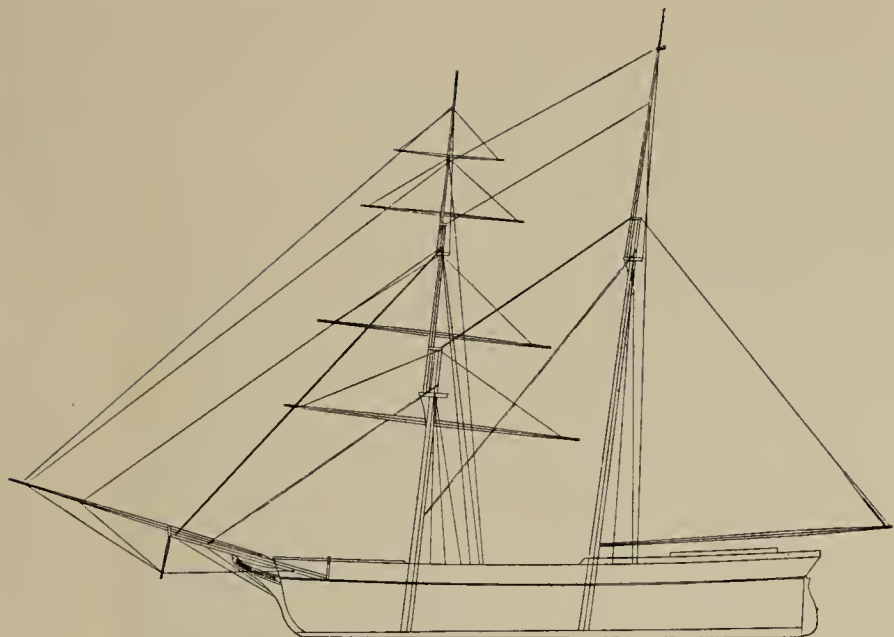
Another letter to Mr. Holmes from a ship Chandler in New York, dated January 30, 1857, says: "Enclosed please find bill for provisions for your bark *Abby*, which I fitted out last August, the vessel being now overdue at our port of New York some two months and I fear she has been lost at sea."

About this time another firm of New York ship chandlers sent Joseph Holmes a bill against the bark *Abby* for supplies, not approved by Captain Nickerson before his last sailing, and on that account it was disputed by Mr. Holmes. In writing this firm protesting this bill he closes his letter to them saying, "this bill which you now present has laid in the dark six months and floats up from a *sinking ship* to be paid from nothing."

"Signed, JOSEPH HOLMES.

The letter from Nantucket is dated March 11, 1857, and is addressed:



SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF BRIG *Frank Henry* OF KINGSTON, 1854

To the Owners of the bark *Abby*  
of Kingston, Mass.

*Respected Sirs:* I have taken the liberty to address you a few lines respecting the whereabouts of the bark *Abby* which sailed from the port of New York in August 1856 for Malaga. I saw by the *New York Herald* of her arrival there, the 10th of September, since which I have not heard from her. My son, Timothy W. Riddle, Jr., went out second officer of her and if you can give me any information respecting her you will confer a great obligation on an anxious parent and his family. With much respect,

Yours obedient servant,  
Signed, TIMOTHY W. RIDDLE.

If the captain had received Mr. Holmes' letter before chartering to Malaga the vessel and he

and his crew might not have been lost, as they would have gone to a different port.

From Captain Nickerson's letters he appears to have done everything possible to be successful with the *Abby*, giving careful attention to loading and discharging cargoes, securing paying charters and using dispatch in getting to sea and the prosecution of his voyage.

The cargo loaded at Malaga was fruit which they were anxious to have landed in New York in the shortest possible time and the *Abby* being deeply loaded was probably lost by carrying sail too long in the heavy fall gales of the North Atlantic, in order that her passage might be shortened by a few days.

The bark *Abby*, brig *Bird of the Wave*, and the schooner, *May Bee*, were the only vessels belonging to Joseph Holmes' large fleet that can be recorded as sailed and never heard from; lost with all hands.

I know of no better way of showing how the owners of vessels carried on business at this period when American ships of all rigs, flying the American flag were to be seen in every port of the world, than to give the captain's letters in full, concerning the bark *Abby*.

Considering the number of vessels owned by Joseph Holmes during his life, few were lost when new and as the *Abby* was only two years old when she made her last voyage it was not difficult to follow them as most of the letters of the two brothers who commanded her had been saved.

The voyages made by the other vessels owned by the Holmes' were of the ordinary kind, accompanied by the usual accidents of the sea as to the loss of spars, sails and so forth.

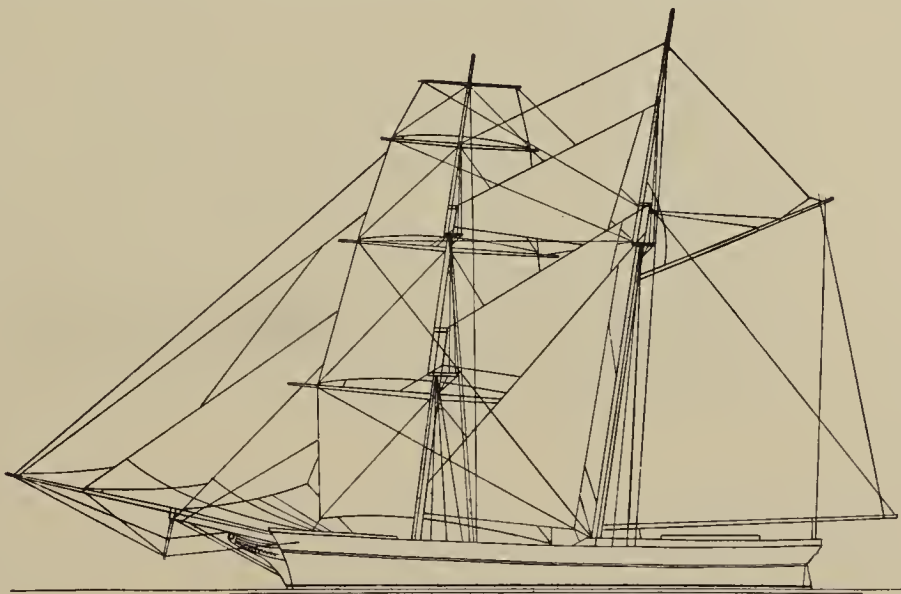
#### BRIG *Frank Henry*

Brig *Frank Henry* of Kingston, 99 tons, built at Kingston by Nathaniel D. Drew, in 1854; owned by Alexander Holmes.

#### REMARKS

She was lost soon after launching on her second voyage.

She was named for Frank Henry Holmes, son of Alexander Holmes. Cornelius Bartlett, a ship carpenter

SAIL PLAN OF BRIG *Frank Henry* OF KINGSTON, 1854



BARK "SICILIAN" CAPT. JOSEPH A. LAVENDER, ENTERING SMYRNA HARBOR 1880



MODEL OF BRIG *Frank Henry* OF KINGSTON, 1854

of Kingston, who kept a diary, says, "Aug. 19, 1853. Joining a little brig for Alexander Holmes in his yard. Nathaniel D. Drew, builder. Jan. 21st, 1854. The brigantine *Frank Henry* went out of the river, launched the 19th, bound for Boston. No ice or snow."

She was launched fully rigged and ready for sea. Alexander Holmes, grandson of the owner, has the half hulled model of this vessel and it shows the finest lines of any of the vessels built on Jones River.

Evidently an error has been made in describing the rig of the *Frank Henry*. The records in the Plymouth Custom House seem to have classed this vessel as a schooner, but she was always spoken of as a brig. Since her name was recorded in the present story of Kingston vessels, the sheer and spar plans have been found that were made by her designer, Nathaniel D. Drew. These show her to have been rigged as a hermaphrodite brig, a rig that was then fast taking the place of the brigantine and full rigged brig. At this time any two-masted vessel with yards on her foremast and a square foresail was called a brig or brigantine by those who worked or went in them, and unless there is a picture of spar plan it is impossible to know what was the actual rig of the vessel.

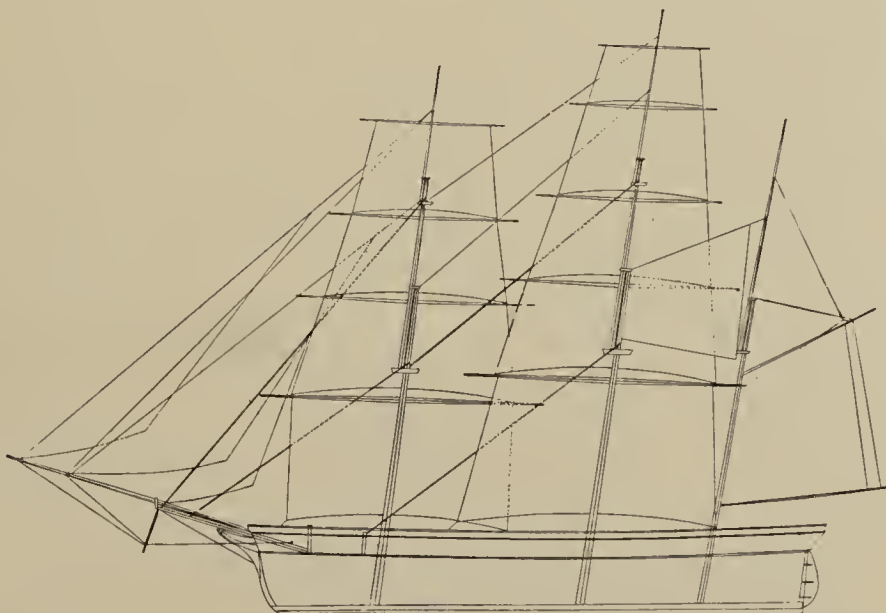
#### BARK *Sicilian*

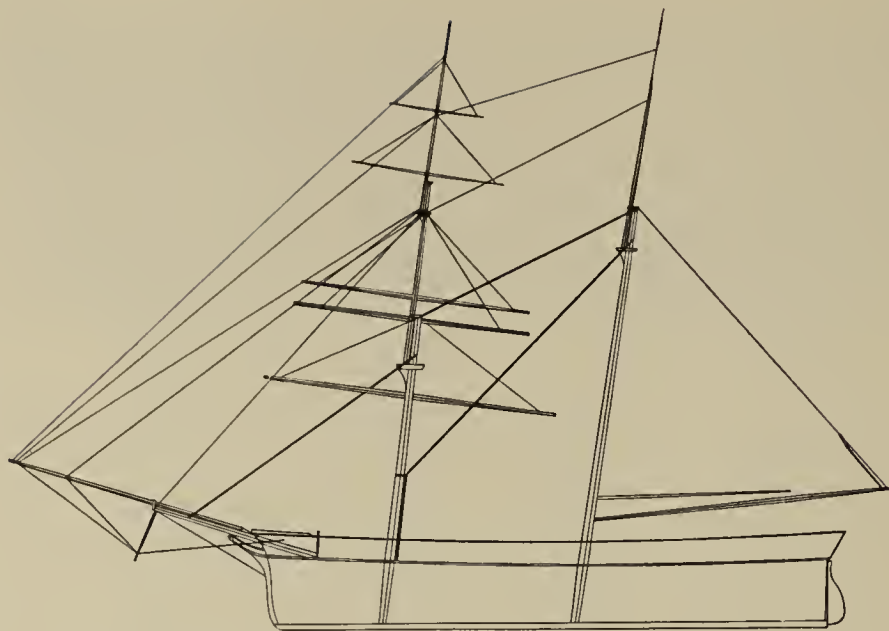
Bark *Sicilian* of Kingston, 321 tons, built at Kingston in 1855, by Edward Holmes, master carpenter, and Joseph Holmes; owned by Joseph Holmes  $\frac{3}{4}$ , Edward Holmes  $\frac{1}{8}$  and Allen Dawes  $\frac{1}{8}$ .

#### REMARKS

The bark *Sicilian* was built for the Mediterranean fruit trade. Her dimensions were as follows: 115 feet  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, 25 feet 10 inches wide and 11 feet 10 inches deep. She was valued at \$20,000 when she first sailed December 18, 1855. She was first commanded by Captain Allen Dawes; January 7, 1856, he was in her at Marseilles and the bark *Fruiter* commanded by Captain Josephus Dawes was at the same port, both being from Boston. Captain Allen says he thinks the *Sicilian* will sail as well as the *Fruiter* when he gets his sails cut so as to make them set. He had a twenty-nine days' passage out. He went to Malaga and back to Boston and died in 1857, when Captain Josephus Dawes took charge, Captain James being in the *Fruiter*.

August, 1858, the bark went to Constantinople, Captain James H. Dawes, from New York; cargo, rum. He says he had rum in his cabin, stateroom and deck house, and that she was never so full of cargo since she was built. Most of his provisions were on deck as it was summer, and the bread and

SAIL PLAN OF BARK *Neapolitan* OF KINGSTON, 1856

SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF BRIG *Bird of the Wave* OF KINGSTON, 1857

flour in the water closet in cabin. Captain Dawes left her about 1861 and took the *Fruiterer*, new, and Captain Lavender took command of the *Sicilian*. He was followed by Captain Andrew Burditt as master who continued as such until she was sold to Boston in 1864. She was sold to Baker and Morrill of Boston for \$16,000.

The following item is from the *Boston Globe* of March 3, 1925, and is taken from an article on "Two Forgotten North Shore Wrecks. Barks from the Mediterranean Lost at Swampscott and Lynn Beach."

The article after describing the loss

of the bark *Tedesco* with all hands, January 18, 1857, also described the loss of the bark *Vernon*, February 5, 1859, when all hands were saved and concludes:

"It was somewhat singular in regard to this vessel that, having sailed from Messina on the same day with the bark *Sicilian*, both vessels should meet in the Boston Bay on Wednesday night, in a snowstorm, and that after recognizing each other, the former should go ashore on the north side of the bay and the latter, by standing more to the southward, should experience a similar misfortune by driving upon Calf Island, near the Outer Brewster.

The *Sicilian*, however, was rather more fortunate than her consort. After striking, she swept off into deep water and her commander, Captain James H. Dawes, immediately let go his anchors. The crew manned the pumps and by dint of hard labor kept the vessel free.

#### BARK *Neapolitan*

Bark *Neapolitan* of Kingston, 320 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes, in 1856; owned by Joseph Holmes.

#### REMARKS

The bark *Neapolitan* was also built for the fruit trade and was valued at \$20,000 when she first sailed from Boston. Her first voyage was from Boston to Smyrna, Captain David Ellis, and she was there March 6, 1856, together with the *Fruiter*, bound to Boston. In 1857 and 1858 she was in the West Coast of Africa trade, carrying to Boston palm oil, which was picked up in small lots along the coast, often making the voyages quite long, Captain Ellis then being master.

In January, 1862, while bound from Mediterranean ports with fruit for Boston, Captain Andrew Burditt, master, she was captured in the Straits of Gibraltar by the Confederate cruiser *Sumter*, Captain Raphael Semmes, and burned, the captain and crew being allowed to save their personal effects, and landed at Gibraltar.

The *Sumter* was the first ship of war commissioned by the Confederate States and the first to fly the Confederate flag. She was a small screw steamer of 500 tons burden rigged as a barkentine, that had escaped the blockade at New Orleans, June 30, 1861. After cruising in the West Indies and on the coast of South America, having captured and burned a number of Northern vessels, she arrived at Cadiz, Spain, for repairs and coal. She was ordered to sea by the Spanish government and was on her way to Gibraltar when the capture of the *Neapolitan* took place. The account of the capture and burning is best told in Admiral Semmes' own words:

"We made the light at Gibraltar just as the day was dawning, and hurried on by the current, moved rapidly up the Strait. Several sails that were coming down the Mediterranean



became plainly visible from the deck as the twilight developed into day. We could not think of running into Gibraltar before overhauling these sails; we might, perchance, find an enemy among them, and so we altered our course and gave chase; as so many barks, ancient and modern, heathen, Christian and Moor had done before us in this famous old Strait.

"The telescope soon revealed the secret of the nationality of two of the sails; they being as plainly as symmetry and beauty of outline, the taper and grace of spars, and whiteness of canvas — produced upon our own cotton fields — could speak, American. To these, therefore, we directed our attention.

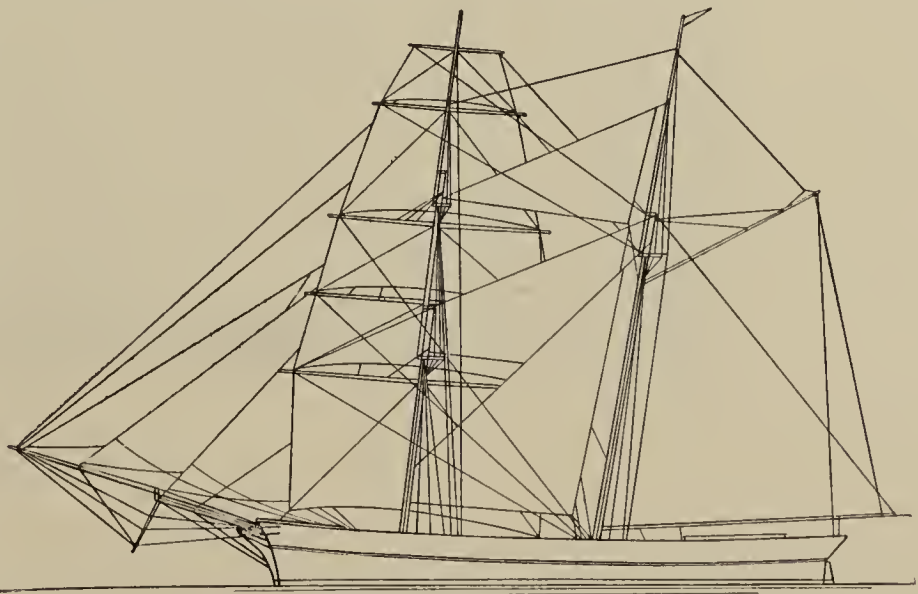
"It was a couple of hours before we came up with the first of these ships. She was standing over toward the African side of the Strait, though still distant from the land some six or seven miles. We hoisted our own colors and fired the usual gun. She hauled up her courses and backed her maintopsail at once, and in a moment more, we could see the brightest of stars and stripes fluttering in the breeze, and glittering in very joyousness as it were, in the rays of the morning's sun; for the captain of the prize had evidently treated himself to a new ensign.

"The cat ran close enough to parley with the mouse before she put her paw on it. The bark, for such the prize was, proved to be the *Neapolitan* of Kingston, Mass., from Messina, in the island of Sicily, bound for Boston with a cargo of fruit, dried and fresh, and fifty tons of sulphur. She had been freshly painted, with that old robber, the bald eagle, surrounded by stars, gilded on her stern; her decks looked white and sweet after the morning's ablution which she had just undergone; her sails were well hoisted and her sheets well home; in short, she was a picture to look at, and the cat looked at her as a cat only can look at a sleek mouse. And then only to think, that the sly little mouse, looking so pretty and so innocent, should have so much of that villainous material called sulphur in its little pouch!

"The master stated in his deposition that the entire cargo belonged to the British house of Baring Brothers, it being consigned to an agent of theirs in Boston. The object of so wording the deposition was of course to save the cargo as neutral property, but as I happened to know that the Boston house of the Barings, instead of being an agent merely, was a partner of the London house, the master took nothing by his deposition. Besides, if there had been no doubt as to the British ownership, sulphur going to an enemy's country is contraband of war; and in this case the contraband of war was not only condemnable of itself, but it tainted all the rest of the cargo, which belonged to the same owner.

"The master, who was as strongly marked in his Puritan nationality as the Israelite is in the seed of Abraham, feeling himself securely intrenched behind the Baring Brothers, was a little surprised when I told him that I should burn his ship, and began to expostulate. But I had no time for parley, for there was another ship demanding my attention; and so, transferring the prisoners from the doomed ship to the *Sumter* as speedily as possible, the *Neapolitan* was burned; burned in the sight of Europe and Africa, with the turbaned Moor looking upon the conflagration on one hand, and the garrison of Gibraltar and the Spaniard on the other.

"Previously to applying the torch, we took a small liberty with some of the excellent fruit of the Barings, transferring a number of drums of figs, boxes of raisins and oranges, to the cooks and stewards of the different messes."



SAIL PLAN OF BRIG *Bird of the Wave* OF KINGSTON, 1857



BARK *Fruiterer* OF KINGSTON, 1861



BRIG *Bird of the Wave*

Brig *Bird of the Wave* of Kingston, 178 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes, in 1857; owned by Joseph Holmes and Edward Holmes.

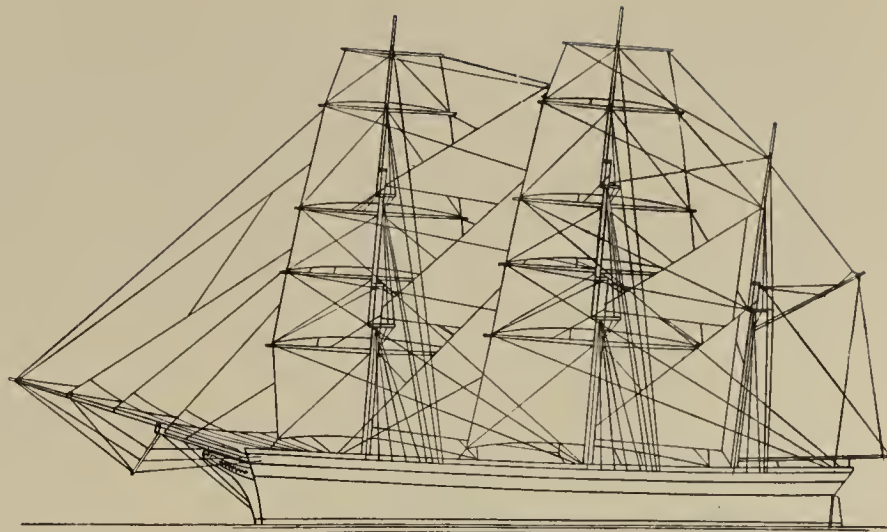
## REMARKS

The first voyage of the brig, *Bird of the Wave*, was from Boston to Barcelona in 1858. Captain, Andre Burditt; Robert Thompson, mate. Robert Thompson from this time remained in the employ of the Holmes' as mate and master until about 1887, when the last vessel

owned by the Holmes, schooner *Mary Baker* was sold. He was a very able shipmaster and highly thought of by Mr. Edward Holmes.

The brig had a forty-one days' passage to Barcelona and the captain wrote that it was a very rough trip and lost part of deck load of wood. Vessel did not leak very bad and was very fast. She went to Messina and loaded fruit for Boston. In 1858, July 4th, she was at Jacmel for Boston, B. N. Adams, master, who writes home that brig is very fast.

In 1859, she sailed from Boston, Captain Andrew Burditt's brother, Alfred, master, and was never heard from again; all hands lost. She was a very sharp vessel and probably run under carrying sail in bad weather. It was thought at the time she was lost on Georges, as there was a hard southeast gale the day after she left Boston.

SAIL PLAN OF BARK *Egypt* OF KINGSTON, 1860BARK *Egypt*

Bark *Egypt* of Kingston, 557 tons, built at Kingston, in 1860, by Edward Holmes, master carpenter, and Joseph Holmes; owned by Joseph Holmes  $\frac{4}{8}$ , Alexander Holmes  $\frac{1}{8}$ , Paraclete Holmes  $\frac{1}{8}$ , Edward Holmes  $\frac{1}{8}$  and William S. Adams  $\frac{1}{8}$ .

## REMARKS

The bark *Egypt* was 557 tons and her dimensions were 139 feet 7 inches long, 29 feet  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and 14 feet  $7\frac{1}{4}$  inches deep. Albert Holmes of Plymouth was her first master and Robert Thompson, mate. She sailed from Boston, new, for New Orleans and from there to Bordeaux with claret staves and return to New Orleans. From New Orleans she went again to Bordeaux and from there to San Francisco. On her return she was sold in 1863 for \$34,000 to Henry Sears, Boston. Lemuel Holmes, son of Edward Holmes was one of her crew on her first voyage.

This bark was named *Egypt* for the farm where Joseph Holmes was born. This was called Egypt because his father, who owned it and whose given name was also Joseph, always raised large crops of corn. The farm was situated in the western part of the town of Kingston on what, in old plans, was called the road to Hanson, now called Egypt road, not far from the southern end of Silver Lake and this section continues to be called Egypt to this day. Most of this farm is still owned by the Holmes family but is not cultivated.

BARK *Fruiterer*

Bark *Fruiterer* of Kingston, 321 tons, built at Kingston by Joseph Holmes, in 1861; owned by Joseph and Edward Holmes. Stephen Holmes, measurer.

## REMARKS

The *Fruiterer* was built for the fruit trade from southern Europe, but on account of the war she was used for other business. Her dimensions were 115 feet long, 25 feet wide and



CAPTAIN JAMES H. DAWES

11 feet deep. The story of this vessel as told by Mr. James A. Simmons of Duxbury who at this date, May 1, 1926, is the only survivor of the ship's company on her first and only voyage is as follows:

The *Fruiterer* left Boston, new, in 1861, bound to Malaga in command of Captain James H. Dawes of Kingston; Calvin H. Bryant, Plympton, mate; Justus A. Bailey, Kingston, second mate. The crew was what was called a home crew and their names were as follows:

*Steward*, OZRO WOODWARD, Duxbury  
*Sailors*: CHARLES SIMMONS, Duxbury  
 GUSTAVUS ELLIS, Plympton  
 WILLARD CLARK, Duxbury  
 HENRY O'HARA, Boston  
 TRESCOTT TUPPER, Kingston  
 JAMES A. SIMMONS, Duxbury

At Malaga the bark loaded wine, raisins and lemons for San Francisco. They had a very good run to Cape Horn where the bark *Egypt* of Kingston, owned by Joseph Holmes, and commanded by Captain Albert Holmes, was sighted. She left

Bordeaux sixteen days before the *Fruiterer* left Malaga. Captain Dawes signaled the *Egypt* but she would not reply and they soon passed her. When the *Fruiterer* arrived off the Golden Gate a bark was sighted just ahead, and after taking a pilot, they learned that the bark was the *Egypt*. Captain Dawes immediately ordered all sail made. They passed the *Egypt* and anchored in San Francisco bay just before the other vessel. This was a very close race from Cape Horn, but Captain Dawes was much disappointed that he did not beat the *Egypt* more as he had made a much faster passage from the Mediterranean to Cape Horn.

From San Francisco the *Fruiterer* went to Yokohama making the passage in thirty-five days, which at that time was the fastest passage that had been made between the two ports. After leaving Japan Captain Dawes employed the bark in freighting on the China coast between Chinese ports and to Japan, and at that time American vessels had very good freights for these coasting voyages. They often remained in Chinese waters several years before returning home.

October 22, 1863, the *Fruiterer* sailed from Foochow for coast ports and the next morning, October 23, at 4.20, the vessel being under topsails, weather thick, and a fresh gale blowing, was run down and sunk by the *S. S. Viscount Canning*, an English steamer under the Siamese flag. The steamer was running before the wind under sail and steam, going very fast and struck the bark near the mizzen chains, tearing away her stern. Trescott Tupper was at the wheel and was left on the after part of the vessel where he supported himself in the water on a broken deck beam for seventy-six hours and during that time had nothing to eat but a small water snake which he caught. He was picked up by a Dutch bark and taken into a Chinese port where he found Captain Josephus Dawes, who was there in the Boston bark, *Valetta*, freighting on the China coast. He reported the bark lost with all hands not knowing that the rest of the crew had been rescued by the *Canning* and already landed, reporting him as lost. This bark was a very fast vessel and had an elaborate figurehead carved by Charles Holmes of Kingston.

## CAPTAIN JAMES H. DAWES

He was the youngest of the three brothers and was born in Duxbury in 1826. Like his brother, Josephus, he began his seafaring life when quite young for he was mate for his



MODEL OF THE SCHOONER *Fisher*, 1865 AND *Mary Baker* OF KINGSTON, 1869

brother, Captain Allen, in the brig *Belize* when she was new and later took command of her. He also commanded the barks *Fruiter* and *Sicilian*, both used for the Mediterranean fruit trade.

In 1861, Joseph Holmes launched the bark *Fruiterer* and Captain Dawes, who was in the *Sicilian*, left her to take charge of the new vessel, being in her when she was lost in the China Sea in 1863. The story of this disaster is told in the "Remarks" on the *Fruiterer* and the "Remarks" on other vessels he went in contain accounts of his voyages while in them.

The picture of him is taken from one made in San Francisco about 1880 while master of his own ship *Matchless* of Boston.

About 1864 he came to Kingston to live, buying the property now occupied by the pastor of St. Joseph's parish of Kingston, and died there in 1905.

On his monument in the Kingston cemetery is carved a globe and an anchor, signifying "Around the world and anchored at last."

#### SCHOONER *Fisher*

Schooner *Fisher* of Kingston, 86 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, in 1865; owned by Edward Holmes.

#### REMARKS

This vessel was one of the last two schooners owned in Kingston and was used for fishing, coasting and West India voyages. She left Kingston May 3, 1865, new, on a Grand Bank trip in command of Captain Elisha Eldridge of West Chatham and later Captain Elisha Morton Eldridge was in command. Captain Otis Finney of Plympton was master on many Bank trips and a number of men belonging to Kingston, Plympton, and Duxbury made up her crews. Calvin Bryant was captain on her last trip to the Grand Bank a year or two before she was sold.

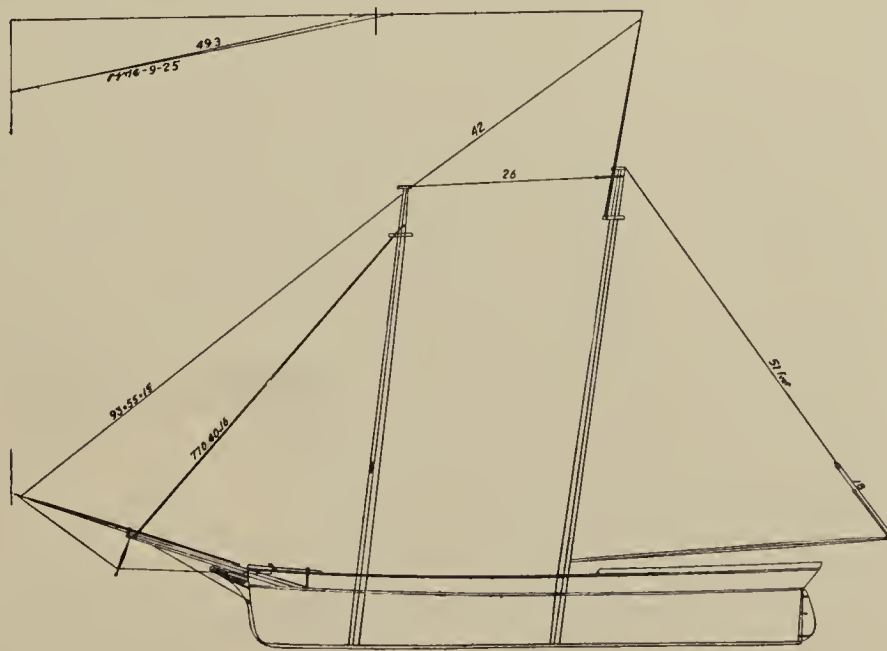
At one time she was chartered to bring fruit from the West Indies to New York and was one of the first vessels to be engaged in that trade.

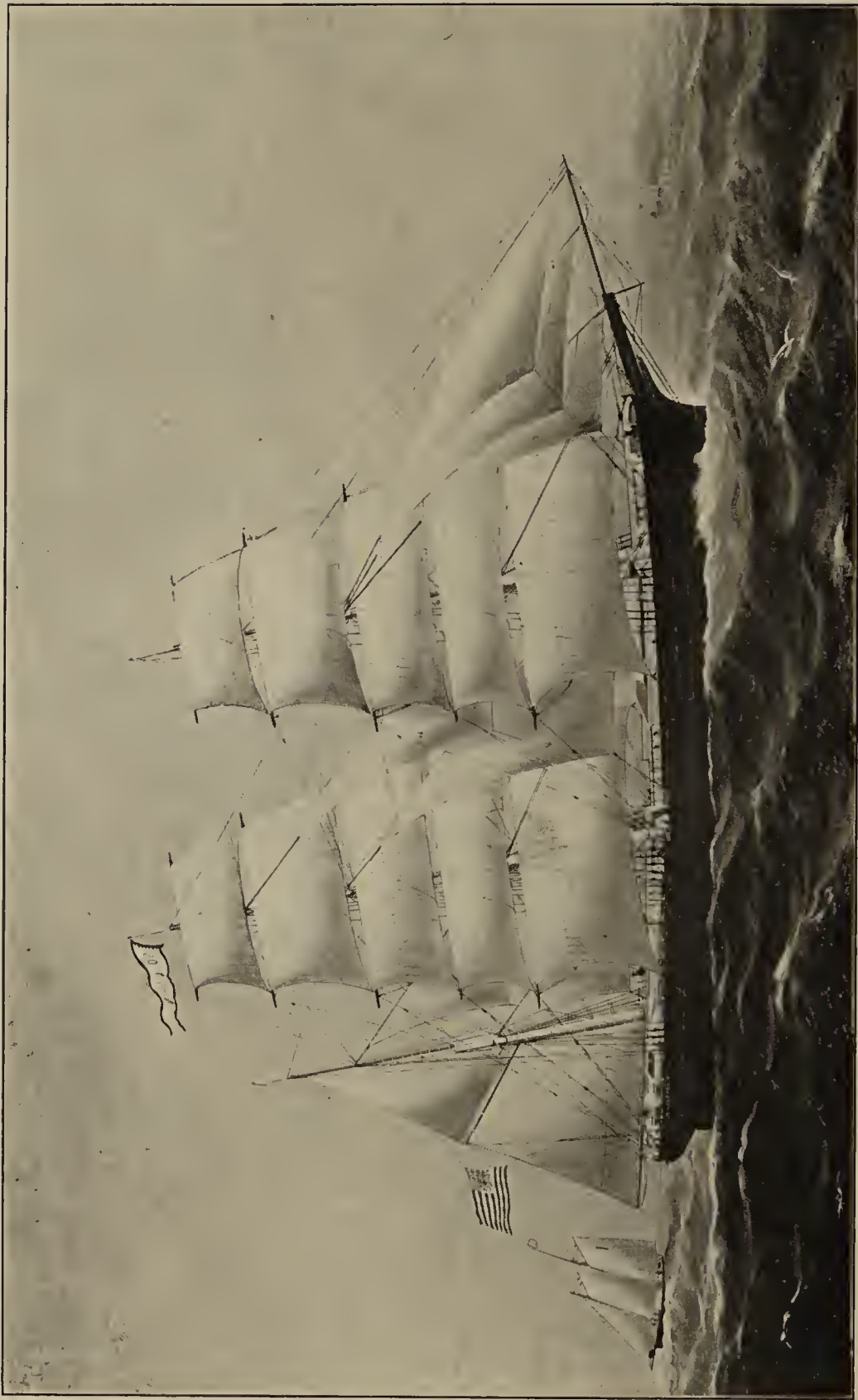
In 1884 she was sold to the Nicholsons of Bucksport, Me., who carried on a fishing business and was soon after lost near Portland.

#### CAPTAIN CALVIN H. BRYANT

Living most of his life, when on shore, in Plympton, where he was born in 1827, he was always associated with Kingston through the family of Edward Holmes.

On retiring from the sea he made Kingston his home and died here

SHEER AND SPAR PLAN OF SCHOONER *Fisher* OF KINGSTON, 1865



BARK *Solomon* OF KINGSTON, 1866



in 1899. Although he first appears in the Records as mate of the bark *Fruiterer* in 1861, it is probable that he sailed in other Kingston vessels before this, as a boy or young man.

After the sinking of the *Fruiterer* he became master of a Boston vessel and for many years was in the coasting trade on the China coast; several years after giving up the sea, in 1881 and 1882, he made two salt fishing trips to the Grand Bank for Edward Holmes in the schooner *Fisher* and then retired from the sea for good.

#### BARK *Solomon*

Bark *Solomon* of Kingston, 600 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, in 1866; owned by Edward Holmes.

#### REMARKS

This was the largest bark built in Kingston and next in tonnage to the largest ship, *Joseph Holmes*. After launching, she was rigged at Rocky Nook Wharf and taken to Boston, having been sold to Daniel Draper of Boston, who named her for Solomon Hancock before she was launched. Her first voyage was to Smyrna with rum. She was still owned in Boston in 1877, but afterward reported used as a hulk in Hong Kong.

This vessel was about one-half completed when work was stopped on her and the schooner *Fisher* was built, her keel being laid just south of the *Solomon* and she was launched out of the same dock, there being just room for her to launch by the *Solomon's* stern.

By the kind permission of Messrs. Robinson and Dow, the pictures of the bark *Solomon* and ship *Leodes* in a storm are shown in this book.

They were taken from "The Sailing Ships of New England. Second Series." By Robinson and Dow. Publication Number Five of the Marine Research Society of Salem, Mass.

#### SCHOONER *Mary Baker*

Schooner *Mary Baker* of Kingston, 101 tons, built at Kingston by Edward Holmes, in 1869; owned by Edward Holmes.

#### REMARKS

This schooner was the last vessel owned in Kingston. She was launched in 1869 and was named *Mary Baker* for the daughter of Captain Otis Baker of Kingston who had married a cousin of Edward Holmes. She was used for many years in the West India trade, running into Boston and New York. She was one of the first vessels to bring bananas to this country from the West Indies. Captain Robert Thompson was master of this vessel nearly all the time till she was sold and made many very fast and successful voyages. She was also used in the Bank fisheries. In 1883, she was hauled into the north timber dock at the Landing and retopped, this being the last carpenter's work ever done on a vessel in the Holmes' shipyard at the Landing. Mr. Edward Holmes having become an aged man, eighty-one years old and the vessel lying alongside of the wharf at the Landing for three years and also old, was sold in 1887 to the Nicholsons of Bucksport, Me., and a few years after dragged ashore in a gale of wind while anchored off Rockport, Mass., and was a total loss.



CAPTAIN CALVIN H. BRYANT

The Nicholson's having previously bought the *Fisher*, which had been found to be a vessel well adapted to their fishing business and knowing that the *Mary Baker* was built on the same lines sent Captain Angus Nicholson in November, 1887, to buy her of Mr. Holmes and bring her home when they learned she was for sale.

Mr. Holmes at this time being in poor health was unable to superintend the outfitting of the vessel as he had been accustomed to do when one was sold, which accounts for the trouble Captain Nicholson experienced on his passage home as is shown in his letter, of which the following is a copy:

Bucksport, Nov. 26th, 1887.

Friend Holmes,

I thought I would drop you a few lines to let you know how we are getting along with the *Mary Baker*.

After Edward left us in Boston I took on board 1000 barrels of flour for Bangor, but some of them laughed at me saying I would lose both vessel and flour, the vessel having been hauled up so long she would be damaged.

We came outside and took a heavy breeze of wind, but it was fair, but come to look around we found we were on a lee shore and then I had to haul snug on to the wind and carry sail very hard to save life and property.

The first thing we knew the forerigging gave out. There was a scrape. We had to get everything aloft we could to save the foremast. Only three of us on board. Would like you to let me know if the main rigging is as old as the forerigging. If it is I will have

to condemn it. I think this is the first rigging she ever had.

Now, I hope you are well, smart and able to go around without those sticks. If you were well when I was there you would have saved us all this trouble we had. What caused all the trouble was, one of the compasses was broken and the other one was two and one-half points out of the way, and if you were well to wait on us there is no doubt we would of had the spirit compass. But I have no doubt you will send it down by express.

I shall fit the *Mary Baker* for 2200 quintals of fish and if she comes back and you receive a nice package of tongues and sounds by express, you may depend it will be from the *Mary Baker*.

We got the flour out and did not have to pay any damages as she leaked but very little.

Yours Resp.,

Signed, ANGUS NICHOLSON.

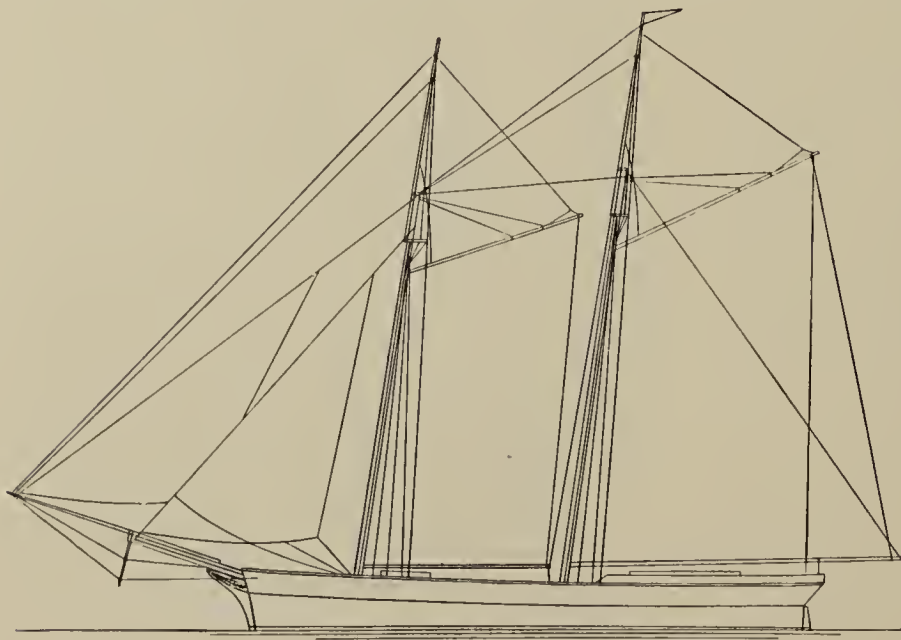
Mr. Holmes died the following spring and this letter is the last record of a voyage of a Kingston vessel.

This vessel was built on the same model as the *Fisher* only about ten feet longer on the keel, which increased her tonnage by fifteen tons. Above water she was painted black outside with a white stripe around her at the upper bends or waterways and a green bottom. Bowsprit painted black, jib-boom and masts bright — with tops painted white, fore and main booms and gaffs bright. Rails and inside of bulwarks and houses on deck, white with trimmings and deck fittings blue.

On account of her being used so much in the West Indies, about 1876, this schooner in order to obtain crews, who were then beginning to demand better accommodations, had a house built on deck abaft the foremast, divided by a partition into a forecabin and

galley. This was much more comfortable for the crew, especially in the warm latitudes, for the custom had been for the forecabin to be below decks, forward of the foremast on all of the smaller vessels.

In the fall or winter when engaged in coasting or West India voyages with no forward house, a small portable house about six feet square and five feet high, called a caboose, was brought on board and lashed to ring bolts on deck abaft the foremast and used for a galley by the cook, there being just room enough for a stove, little wood or coal box and the few cooking



SAIL PLAN OF SCHOONER *Mary Baker* OF KINGSTON, 1869



utensils needed. Sliding doors on each side provided light and ventilation. The stores were kept in the cabin and below decks, and brought up as required.

Across the after end of the caboose was a bench used for a seat by the cook when at the stove, for with a scant five feet of head room most of the work in the caboose was done sitting down, the stove being within easy reach from the bench. Sometimes caboose and cook were both washed overboard by the vessel shipping a heavy sea and then captain and crew were on short allowance as far as cooked food was concerned for the rest of that voyage. The caboose was never carried to the Banks as all the room on deck was needed for the dories, rope cable, gurry butts and the handling of the fish when first caught. The crew lived in the forecastle below decks, forward, and in this confined dark place, they cooked, ate and slept. It was worse in the smaller and earlier vessels that used fireplaces instead of stoves, the cook often being a fourteen-year-old boy, probably making his first voyage to sea.

Augustus Simmons of Kingston, a Grand Bank fisherman who died several years ago a very old man, was one of these fourteen-year-old boys who went cook. As a boy, in 1840, he was on the *John Drew*, going as cook or as he called it, cook's helper. During his latter years he often spoke to his nephews, Alexander and Dr. Arthur B. Holmes, of some of his experiences on this voyage. He said they cooked in a fireplace with a wooden chimney which had to be taken down in bad weather, and then no cooking was done. Each fisherman brought most of his own supplies, doing his own cooking, and the boy or cook's helper cleaned up and cooked what was the custom for the vessel to furnish the crew.

Coming home he remembered seeing the first cook stove that was used in Kingston. They had a severe season on the Banks that summer and vessels first to come home reported a number lost.

The *John Drew* being overdue, the boy's mother became anxious as to the safety of the vessel and crew, and spoke to Joseph Holmes about it. He told her not to worry as the schooner was strongly built and able to stand any kind of weather. They were gone four months and bound home arrived off the Gurnet after dark when no report of their being below could be made. Continuing on, up Kingston Bay, they anchored off Cripples Rocks. The captain, who lived near his parents, was anxious to see his family, and knowing the boy was also anxious to be at home, took him in a boat and landing at the mouth of the river, both walked home to Northwest Kingston reaching there about 11.00 P.M. The boy knocked on the window of the room in which his father and mother were sleeping and they were much surprised at his appearing at that time of night so unexpectedly.

His wages were \$11 per month which made his summer's work come to \$44. When his mother went to Alexander Holmes, the owner of the vessel, to settle for her son's voyage she found that she owed Mr. Holmes \$32 for supplies, which, due to the hard times of 1837, made the amount due him \$37. There was \$7 from the boy's wages left her. With this she bought him a piece of corduroy and made him a suit of clothes so that he could go to school the following winter.

A description of the forecastle and cabin of the *Mary Baker* before the forward deck-house was built will apply to all of the later vessels owned by the Holmes' and others, used for Bank fishing. The forecastle was situated in the eyes of the vessel and the entrance was through a hatchway covered by a small house or companion way, just forward of the foremast and abaft the windlass.

Descending the stairs, which were almost perpendicular, one was confronted by a table abaft the windlass bitts where they went through the forecastle from deck to keel.

On the starboard side with a narrow bench in front of them within reach of the table which was opposite to them were four bunks, two lower and two upper. To port, they were arranged the same and at the after end was the stove which came just beside the foot of the stairs. Lockers on the side of the vessel opposite the stove held dishes and cooked foods. Opening out of the forecastle at its after end was a small, roughly finished





CAPTAIN ROBERT THOMPSON

room through which came the vessel's foremast and was used for the stores for the crew. A movable bench made a seat for those occupying the after end of the table at meals, the table having a high rising around its edge to hold the dishes from sliding off when it was rough. The stove pipe came up through the deck above the stove and at each side of the companionway was a six-inch glass bull's-eye, let into the deck for light, though a smoky lamp and the companionway also furnished light. This was the quarters for the crew of six or eight men and in bad weather it was one stifling place!

The cabin in the after part of the vessel usually had a small room on the starboard side forward for the captain and on the port side were two double berths under the deck. A table, chairs and some lockers in the after end of the cabin completed these quarters. Besides being used by the captain, the cabin was also the quarters of the sharesmen and older members of the crew. In

the later vessels some of the crew were hired by the month and others went on shares.

The *Lucy Holmes* was painted in the same style as the *Mary Baker*, except that she had a red stripe around her upper bends instead of white.

The *Fisher* was always painted a medium shade of green above the waterline with a darker green for her bottom. Rails and inside of bulwarks were green and house and deck fittings were of the same color. Masts and spars were finished the same as those on the *Mary Baker*. Green seemed to have been quite a common color for fishing vessels up to the time the last one was sold from here. With the exception of the *Fisher* and *Lucy Holmes* all of the vessels built by Edward Holmes were painted as I have described the *Mary Baker* to have been.

The schooners built by Mr. Edward Holmes were never coppered, for their stay in the warm water of the south was only for a short time, and soon coming north into cold water and often up the river to the Landing, the cold and fresh water killed all worms in their bottoms. The barks and brig, *Helen A. Holmes*, built by Mr. Holmes, were coppered before launching.

#### CAPTAIN ROBERT THOMPSON

The picture of Captain Robert Thompson shows him as he looked as a young man at about the time of his coming to Kingston in the brig *Bird of the Wave*, in 1858.

For a number of years he lived in Boston when ashore, but during the last of his sailing for Edward Holmes he made his home with him or his son, Edward K. Holmes of Kingston, and so can be called a Kingston captain.

Mr. Holmes always placed great confidence in him and no sea captain ever took more care of his owner's interests in the management of his vessel than did Captain Thompson.

After the *Mary Baker* was laid up to be sold he sailed out of Boston in various schooners on coasting and West India voyages. When Charles T. Powers of this place was appointed to the command of the *Succoneset Light Ship* in the Vineyard Sound, Captain Thompson, who then had no family or home, joined the *Light Ship* as one of the crew about 1894. He remained on this lightship a few years until the infirmities of age compelled his retirement and he then entered the Sailor's Home in Quincy and soon after died there.



## EDWARD HOLMES

Edward Holmes, the third son of Joseph Holmes, was born in Kingston, in 1806. He was the last of the old-time shipbuilders of Kingston. Inheriting the Landing from his father at the time of his death in 1863 he continued the business of building and owning of vessels until a few months before he died in 1888.

Like his brothers and other boys of this time his opportunities for an education were limited, there being but one male teacher in the town. He taught part of the year in each school district and his pupils followed him from schoolhouse to schoolhouse.

After going in his father's packets and small coasting schooners several years he made his first deep-water voyage of 1826 in the brig *Edward* of Kingston, 238 tons, which his father had built and named for him in 1825. She was owned by Joseph Holmes and his son Alexander.

As nothing can be found about this vessel after 1826 she was probably sold during 1827. The first voyage of this brig is as follows: sailed from Boston June 17, 1826, captain, Ellis Bradford; Robert Foster, mate; both of Kingston, and Edward Holmes one of the crew; this being his first deep-water voyage. After a passage of ten days she arrived at Charleston, S. C., June 27, 1826, and Captain Bradford writes Mr. Holmes that he thinks the brig will sail well and behave well, and was within thirty miles of Charleston light in five days from Boston.

The day after leaving Boston he says they had a blow from the northeast and ran 200 miles in twenty hours under a close reefed maintopsail and foresail and a boy could have steered her. February 26, 1826, the vessel is partly loaded with cotton for Liverpool. Business very dull. March 15, ready for sea, but did not sail until March 25 on account of head winds, vessel drawing 14 feet.

The captain writes from Liverpool that he arrived there April 22, after a very boisterous passage of thirty-one days with no damage but the stern boat stove at the stern and vessel leaking considerable; had discharged cargo in good order and loaded 180 tons salt and crated goods and left room for thirty or thirty-seven steerage passengers bound for Boston.

The brig sailed May 3, 1826, and after arriving in Boston, was not chartered again until December, 1826, when she sailed from Boston, December 10, for Savannah, captain, Bradford; mate, Robert Foster; and Edward Holmes, again, one of the crew.

The captain writes they arrived at Savannah, December 25, 1826, after a very rough passage of fifteen days, but received no damage, but loss of stern boat. From the letter of instruction to the captain, from Joseph Holmes, she probably loaded cotton again to Liverpool, returning to Boston, and was then sold, as no further accounts of her appear and Mr. Holmes was offered \$10,000 for the brig before her sailing to Savannah and was anxious to dispose of her.

This vessel was a full rigged brig and for those days, a large vessel for this rig and must have been a good sailer to have made the passage to Charleston, S. C., in five days.

In 1834 he was mate of the new ship *Rialto* of Kingston, Perez H. Sampson, master, on a voyage to Charleston, S. C., Liverpool and Boston. On arriving in Boston his brother, Captain Paraclete took command and he continued as mate with his



EDWARD HOLMES

brother for several voyages in this ship. His father's business, as a builder and owner, increasing, he gave up going to sea about 1837 to superintend the work in his father's shipyard.

At this time the demand was for larger vessels and having assisted in the building of the *Rialto* and then going in her for several voyages in the cotton trade, he was well qualified to become his father's master carpenter and improve the design and construction of the ships later built for the carrying of these cargoes. From this time up to the death of his father, Joseph Holmes, in 1863, he was more closely associated with him in his business than any of his other brothers, although all were usually part owners in his vessels as shown by Customs Records.

From 1863 to 1874 he built eight vessels. Two were sold to Boston at the time of launching, or soon after, and one ordered built by Plymouth parties. The largest one was the bark *Solomon*, 600 tons, and while she was on the stocks, in 1865, he built the schooner *Fisher*, 86 tons, to the south and alongside of her. This bark was only 11 tons smaller than the ship *Joseph Holmes*, built by his father, in 1850, and the largest vessel ever built here.

The first vessel he built after taking over the building yard at the Landing, or as later called, the Landing Ship Yard, was the schooner *Anna Eldridge*, 139 tons, and no plan or picture can be found of her. The dimensions of this schooner were as follows: 87 feet 8 inches long, 22 feet 3 inches wide, and 7 feet 2 inches deep. An old account book belonging to Edward Holmes shows that it cost \$9,000 to build her and she was sold for \$10,000 in 1866. The profits for two and one-half years were \$5,000, and \$2,500 of this was for one year. Her first voyage was fishing to the Grand Bank; second to Malaga, and third to the Bahamas. Several other voyages were made to the West Indies with fishing trips to the Grand Bank in between. While owned by Mr. Holmes, Captain Elisha Morton Eldridge of West Chatham commanded this vessel until she was sold.

The schooner *Fisher* was built next and the plan of this vessel and picture of the bark *Solomon* with their story are shown in this book. There are no plans or picture of the schooner *Lucy Holmes* which he built in 1867, but as Kipling makes mention of her in his "Captains Courageous" I have taken the following account from the "Remarks" on schooner *Lucy Holmes* in my "Story of Kingston Vessels."

She was 105 tons and Captain Elisha Morton Eldridge was master of this schooner when new and later Captain Clement Eldridge, a nephew of Captain Elisha Eldridge, was in command, remaining in her until she was sold, about 1874, to Boston parties. She was employed in the usual fishing and West India voyages and her design was similar to that of the *Mary Baker*. She was named for Lucy Holmes, daughter of Edward Holmes. Her name appears in Kipling's book, "Captains Courageous," a story of the Grand Bank, as does that of the schooner, *King Philip* of Kingston, Kipling getting the names of the schooners and idea of writing the book when living in Brattleboro, Vt., from his friend and family physician, Dr. James Conland of that place, who, as a boy, lived in Captain Elisha Morton Eldridge's family in Chatham.

Mrs. Julia H. Tirrell, a friend of my wife, who as a girl lived in Chatham and was then living in North Attleboro, wrote her under date of January 18, 1908, some interesting facts concerning Kipling and Dr. Conland that may not be generally known.

The many tales that must have been told to Kipling by Dr. Conland as to his life on a "grand banker" when a little boy explains how the former was able to write the story of "Captains Courageous" in such a realistic manner when he had never been on the Banks, seen only a few fishing vessels in port and made a trip of a few hours' sail from Boston to Gloucester on the fishing sloop *Venus*, Captain Dent. This Captain Dent was afterward mate with Captain N. B. Watson of this place, who was master of the schooner yacht *Constellation* of Boston and Captain Watson told me the manner of Kipling's going to Gloucester.

Mrs. Tirrell's letter says in part as follows:



*My dear Abby:*

I hoped to see you before this time and tell you about Dr. Conland, but I have been disappointed.

The first I knew of him was when he was thirteen years old and attended the same grammar school I did. Elisha Morton Eldridge had taken him on a fishing voyage the summer before and had brought him home as a sort of protege. I learned later that his father, an Irishman, had gone to California sometime in the fifties and had never been heard from. His mother, a Scotchwoman had been housekeeper for Governor Andrew and he had been cared for by her, but after her death he was forced to shift for himself and had drifted to this fishing vessel — one of your father's I think. From this time on he was an inmate of Captain Eldridge's family, earning enough summers to enable him to attend school winters. He showed marked aptitude for books and his teachers gave him special instruction evenings. When about seventeen he had saved money enough to begin the course at Wilbraham Academy. By working out of school hours he was able to graduate here and little later entered the Medical College at Brattleboro, Vermont. After completing his studies he had the usual trying experience of young doctors struggling to establish a practice, but was soon recalled by an old instructor at Brattleboro to act as his assistant. When the old Doctor retired Dr. Conland took his patients and from that time on had all he wanted to do. Mean-

while, he had become engaged to a cousin of mine. She broke the engagement for what seemed to her good reasons. He soon married a rich woman. One son was born to them, now about 20 years old.

When Kipling married his Vermont wife and went to Brattleboro to live he became acquainted with Dr. Conland and a firm friendship soon developed. The doctor told him some of his early experiences and Kipling became so interested he asked to visit the wharves of Boston and Gloucester, so they went together. The result was "Captains Courageous" which is dedicated to Dr. James Conland. The MS. was presented to him and was one of his most valued possessions. The *Lucy Holmes* is one of the fishing schooners and many of the people are real folks down on the Cape.

After Kipling went away they kept up correspondence, and when he revisited New York and was ill with pneumonia Dr. Conland was summoned.

He was a member of the Vermont Legislature and served on important committees. His own death, which took place about three years ago, I forget just the date, was caused by visiting a patient at midnight during a hard storm when he was unwell himself.

This is a plain unvarnished tale. Of course one might dwell upon his early struggles, etc. at much greater length. If there's any fact you would like that I have omitted, command me.

Affectionately,

Signed, JULIA H. TIRRELL.

I have given Dr. Conland's life, as written by Mrs. Tirrell, so as to show what an orphaned boy, who started life in the forecastle of a fishing vessel, could accomplish by his own efforts. Few boys commencing to follow the sea so young leave it as he did and the verse from Longfellow in the dedication of "Captains Courageous" is most appropriate:

I ploughed the land with horses,  
But my heart was ill at ease,  
For the old seafaring men  
Came to me now and then  
With their sagas of the sea.

After the *Lucy Holmes* was sold, her new owners continued her in the West India trade until she was lost, soon after 1877 on a voyage to these islands.

One of the few sloops built in the shipyards on Jones River was the sloop *Rosewood* which he launched in 1868. This sloop was built for Captain Simon Burgess of Plymouth. She was built between the two timber docks on the middle wharf at the Landing and launched sideways into the river. She was used for lightering and short trips along the coast by Captain Burgess and when quite old was sold to Captain Parker Hall of Duxbury, who used her in the same business a few years and she was then hauled up on Morton's Hole, on the west side of Captain's Hill, and finally went to pieces. When new, her mast was the foremast of the old *Glance*.

Like the bark *Solomon* the bark *Hornet* of 330 tons that he built in 1868 was first registered in the Plymouth Custom House as hailing from Kingston. This vessel was named the *Mary Baker* when launched, but was at once sold to Daniel Draper of Boston. She was taken to Boston with the name covered and on arrival it was taken off, and she was called *Hornet*, and hailed from Boston. Captain David Ellis was her first captain and Robert Thompson, mate; she was used in the Mediterranean fruit trade and other voyages. In 1877, she was owned and hailed from Philadelphia.

As the bark *Mary Baker's* name was changed, Mr. Holmes called the next vessel he





ICHABOD PETERSON, THE MASTER RIGGER

built the *Mary Baker*, which was a schooner of 101 tons. A picture taken from a photograph of the sail plan of this vessel is shown here and the "Remarks" concerning her taken from my "Story of Kingston Vessels" are given in full.

In 1873, he laid the keel of what was to prove to be the last sailing vessel built in Kingston, the brig *Helen A. Holmes*, 316 tons. By this time many of the former ship carpenters of Kingston had died or become too old to work. Fewer vessels were being built in the smaller yards each year and owing to the increased cost of construction and scarcity of orders these yards were fast being abandoned and young men were not learning the trade of shipwright, as in earlier days. For this reason, there was some delay in completing this vessel, workmen having to be hired from other towns.

She was a good sailer, but often in need of repairs and a passage from New Zealand to Scotland very disastrous. At St. Helena she was leaking badly and again at St. Thomas, both most expensive ports of call for vessels in distress. The quality of the work done on her when building or material used may not have been as good as

formerly, but whatever the cause, Mr. Holmes always found her to be the most costly of all his vessels to send to sea. A complete record of this brig's voyages are shown with her picture.

With the new brig he had now three vessels afloat and hailing from Kingston, the schooners *Fisher* and *Mary Baker*, the *Lucy Holmes* having been sold in 1874 when the *Holmes* was building, and the story of their employments is told in the "Remarks" on these vessels. For several years he sent these three schooners to the Grand Bank on salt cod fishing trips and if they all arrived home in the fall at about the same time, as often happened, there were no vacant berths at the Landing or fish wharves. With two schooners washing out and drying their fish and another waiting her turn, the Landing and River were scenes of great activity while this work was going in.

The *Mary Baker*, sold, sailing in the fall of 1887 never to return, and the death of Mr. Holmes the following spring, marked the closing chapter of the shipping industry of Kingston that had been carried on for so many years.

When first married he lived in the house at the Landing, now called the Landing House, belonging to his father. After several years he bought the house now occupied by his grandson, Horace Holmes, and on the death of his brother, Paraclete, came into possession of his place, residing there until his death. This property is now owned by Roland Bailey.

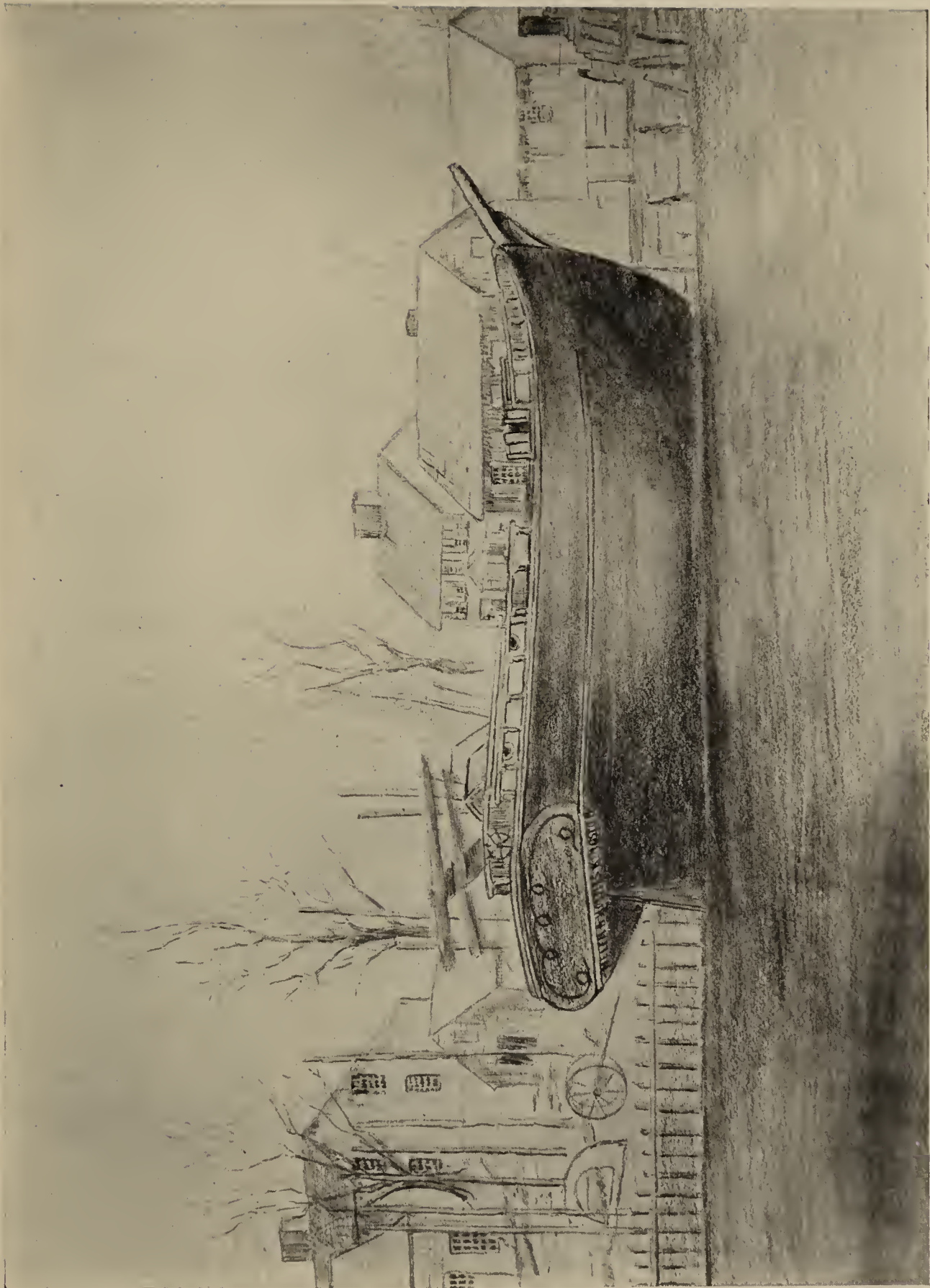
#### ICHABOD PETERSON

He was the son of Thomas and Sarah Alden (Sampson) Peterson, and was born in 1814 at Powder Point, Duxbury. He worked in his father's sail-loft, which was an adjoining building, until he was married in 1842, when he came to Kingston and bought the house in Stony Brook, where he lived the rest of his life.

He was a master rigger and worked in the Kingston shipyards as long as he was able, dying March 22, 1897, age 82 years.

It was a familiar sight to see him with his companion worker, Mr. Samuel Cushing, trudging off to their work at the Landing with their wheelbarrows in summer and hand sleds in winter, in which to bring home from the yards the huge chunks of wood and chips when they came from work at night.





BRIG *Helen A. Holmes* AT THE WHARF AT THE LANDING, 1874



BRIG *Helen A. Holmes* OF KINGSTON. CLEMENT ELDRIDGE, MASTER. IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL, 1874



He was the master rigger for the yards of Joseph Holmes and his sons, Alexander and Edward, and was highly esteemed by them all for his skill in the masting and rigging of their vessels. The safety of a ship when first out of port often depended on what had been done by the riggers, and although sailors always spoke contemptuously of this work as a rigger's job because it was not as finished as theirs, Kingston vessels never suffered any loss from poor workmanship in their rigging.

THE BRIG *Helen A. Holmes* AT THE WHARF AT THE LANDING

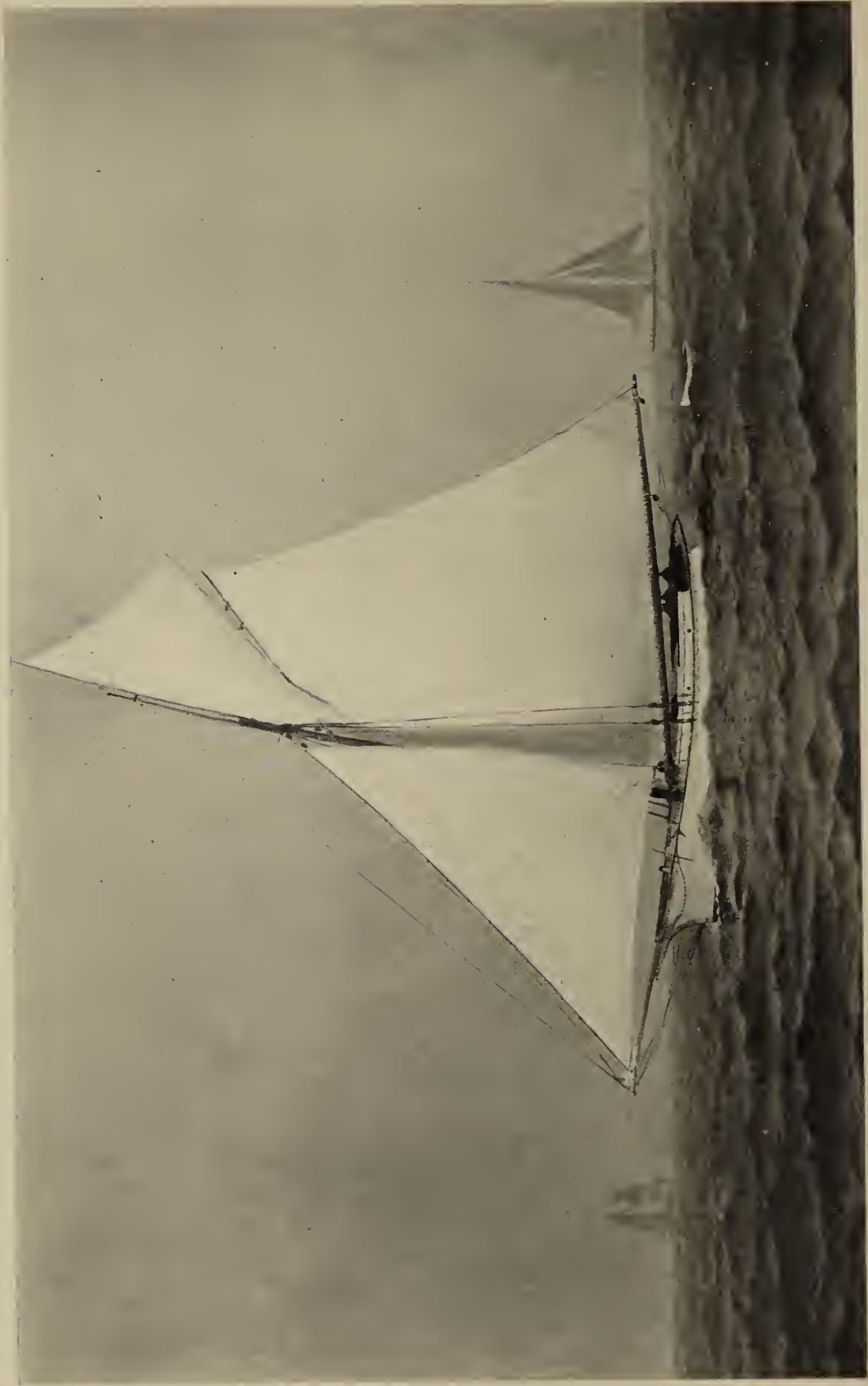
This picture of the brig *Helen A. Holmes* of Kingston is from a pencil sketch made in the spring of 1874, about a week after she was launched and before the masts were stepped or jib-boom rigged out. The vessel lies between the two timber docks, the bow hiding the northerly one, at what was originally Foster's wharf, which was built on the site of the first one at this part of the Landing.

She had a flush deck fore and aft with no bulwarks and the railing that took their place is lacking in several sections, as are many other fittings about her upper works and deck. The reason for this flush deck was to gain a between decks about five feet high and so increase her tonnage, the bottom of the between decks being the real main deck. Some of the earlier vessels were launched with their masts in, yards crossed, sails bent and all ready for sea, but Edward Holmes left all he could of the work of finishing off his vessels above water until after launching, as it was easier to do this alongside of a wharf than when she was on the stocks with the deck and top sides high above the ground. This flush deck was sure to be free from water in bad weather, but decidedly bleak and uncomfortable for sailors with no lee from any bulwarks.

The buildings not concealed by the brig's hull that were in use at the time Edward Holmes was building, are seen and their location can be better placed perhaps by consulting his plan of the Landing. The roof and second story of the rigging, sail and mold loft show over the vessel's bow. On the wharf and joining this is a coal pocket for storing coal brought in the vessels from Philadelphia or New York. Above this pocket is the easterly end of the joiner's loft with door and steps to platform in front. The rear end of this building was almost connected by a shed to the large, square dwelling-house which rises above the center of the vessel and always called the Landing House. This house was built by Stephen Drew from whom Joseph Holmes, in 1806, purchased that portion of the Landing that extends from the bow of the brig to the end of the wharf opposite the joiner's loft.

Under the vessel's stern is a part of the southerly timber dock. An old mast was laid across the entrance to the dock from the ends of the wharves, with pieces of plank driven into the mud and spiked at their tops to the mast. This made a fence on a large scale and held the timber that was kept in the water so it would not become wormeaten, from floating out into the river at high tide. When a launch was to take place the timber was hauled ashore, the mast and planks removed, and the launching was through the opening. To the left and over the vessel's stern are seen the staging poles that stood on each side of the hull of the vessel when she was on the stocks. Over the port corner of the after end of the cabin house the bow staging shows; this was a permanent stage with a gradual incline of planks leading from the ground to the top of the vessel's stern when planked and was used by the carpenters to carry up the planks, knees and other material that went into the decks and upper works as this part of the hull neared completion. Behind the bow staging is a long, one-story building used for a workshop. The floor was the bare ground and the ships' timbers were hewed and shaped here when the weather was unfit to do this out-of-doors. Two saw pits were on one side and a very large stone fireplace on the other, where in cold weather the ship carpenters gathered around to eat their dinners. The work of building a vessel went on out-of-doors in winter the same as in summer, as very little of it could be done under cover and the old-time workmen did not seem to mind the heat or cold.

To the left of the shop is the north end of a building used to store dry lumber in. Above



SLOOP YACHT *Siren* OF KINGSTON, 1880



this to the right and overlooking all, is the roof and east end of the historic Major John Bradford House that stands on a bank across the roadway.

Among the staging poles and near where the keel blocks lay, a pair of high wheels can be seen. These were the wheels to Joseph Holmes' chaise that carried him for many years on journeys to Boston and other places in connection with his business. Becoming old and worn out the body and shafts were taken off and a heavy wooden tongue was fastened to the middle of the axle and these wheels were then used to move small timbers about the yard that were too heavy to be carried on the workmen's shoulders.

To the left of the wheels, leaning against a staging pole is an unfinished semi-circular platform that is the brig's foretop.

The after ends of the keels of the vessels were laid on high blocks on the sloping bank, so the longer ones extended some feet over the water at high tide.

The buildings were all very old and greatly in need of repairs before Edward Holmes removed them and there is no record by whom or when they were built.

#### BRIG *Helen A. Holmes*

Brig *Helen A. Holmes* of Kingston, 316 tons, built at Kingston by Spencer Drew, master carpenter and Edward Holmes, in 1874; owned by Edward Holmes.

#### REMARKS

This vessel was the last vessel built by Edward Holmes, son of Joseph Holmes, in the shipyard at the Landing just below the railroad bridge. She was rigged as a hermaphrodite brig and launched in the spring of 1874. She was named for the wife of Edward K. Holmes. Her dimensions were as follows: 114 95/100 feet long, 28 4/100 feet wide and 15 1/10 feet deep and 316 62/100 tons burden. She was rigged at the Landing and then taken to Rocky Nook Wharf, ballasted and sailed from there for Boston in tow of the tug, *Storm King*, the first of the summer. She was valued at \$28,000 when she left Kingston ready for sea; Clement Eldridge of Harwich was master until she was lost. Her first voyage was from Boston to Antwerp with a general cargo, and returned to Boston with a cargo of pig lead and window glass, Manlius Baker of Kingston being mate and Thatcher Baker of Kingston, one of the crew.

After making two voyages to the Mediterranean she sailed for Dunedin, New Zealand, and from there to Greenock, Scotland, and returned to Boston. She was next chartered for a voyage from Boston to Surinam, South America, and return, and went ashore on Squibnocket Beach, near Gay Head, Martha's Vineyard, in December, 1879. Bad weather coming on she soon went to pieces, vessel and cargo of molasses a total loss. The brig was always an unfortunate vessel and her owner lost very heavily on her.

#### SLOOP *Siren*

Sloop *Siren* of Kingston, 10 tons, owned by Lewis H. Keith.

#### REMARKS

This was a centerboard yacht and was bought in New Bedford by L. H. Keith, in 1877 and used by him for racing and cruising until she was sold to Boston, in 1884. Captain N. B. Watson was master until the year before she was sold, when Captain E. A. Ransom was in charge of her. Her dimensions were as follows: 42 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 3 feet 6 inches deep with centerboard up.

While owned by Mr. Keith she was the fastest sloop of her size on the New England coast and won many prizes in races. She was a centerboard vessel as were most of the yachts of that period and had a large cabin, which with her shoal draft made her a most comfortable yacht for cruising.

On being sold her new owner made some alterations and she never sailed so well again. She was finally sold to parties on the other side of Cape Cod, and the last known of her was that she was used as an oyster boat.





STEAMER *Tiger* OF KINGSTON, 1898



## CAPTAIN NATHAN B. WATSON

He was one of the best-known yachting captains along the coast, a contemporary of Captains Banks, Haff and Charlie Barr of cup defender fame and also of Captain Aubry Crocker, master of the celebrated sloop yacht, *Shadow*, owned by Dr. John Bryant of Cohasset and George Lawley, the yacht designer and builder of Boston.

He was born on Clark's Island, Plymouth Harbor, in 1844, dying there in 1925, and belonged to the old Plymouth family of Watsons who owned Clark's Island for many years. Always living on the Island as a boy he early learned the handling of boats and this training was later the means of making him one of the most skillful racing captains of the Massachusetts and Cape Cod Bays. On his marriage to a sister of Captain Edward A. Ransom he made his home in Kingston, as well as on Clark's Island, building lobster boats and small yachts winters, and going lobstering and fishing summers as has already been told.

When he became master of the schooner yacht *Constellation* he gave up using the boat-shop, except for the storage of boats, being obliged to remain on the yacht the whole year, making cruises to the West Indies in winter or overseeing to her overhauling if laid up. He was captain of the *Constellation* for two owners, Bayard Thayer of Boston and Lancaster, and Francis Skinner, Jr., of Boston. In those years she was the largest and fastest sailing yacht of her class, but on account of her size was obliged to give so much time allowance in many races that it was seldom any great interest could be taken in the contests. After the death of Mr. Skinner the vessel was sold and Captain Watson retired from yachting, spending the winter on the mainland and summer on Clark's Island. It was at this time that he purchased a small launch for going about the bay in, using her for this purpose for a number of years and so retaining his interest in the water until his death. Shortly before this, the boathouse was sold to Dr. Arthur B. Holmes of Kingston and it is now used to haul up his yacht *Seconset* in.

For over fifty years this building has been a gathering place for the boatmen, former sailors and sea captains of Kingston, especially in winter and its only equal was the office of the late Captain John C. Dawes of Kingston where he presided over the famous Bob Stay Club. Many voyages to all parts of the world have been resailed on the old bench alongside the red hot stove by men who were more familiar with foreign ports than some of the nearby towns. Very often in the excitement of recalling the incidents of a particularly hard and long voyage, a passage around the stove in the confined space was full as dangerous to them as one around Cape Horn. Usually in a joking way Captain Watson was only too ready to add to the confusion when several stories were being told at once, with the use of plenty of strong language, by loudly calling the attention of all hands to what he had to say about some of his own cruises and his voice being the loudest he always held the floor.

These old seafaring men would never admit that a modern craft could compare in speed with the old-time vessels they once sailed in and whenever a recently fast passage was reported some one was always sure to have made a better one in some ancient brig or schooner that had been lost or condemned years ago and her very name forgotten by all except the one who went in her.

Before taking command of the *Constellation*, Captain Watson sailed for a number of seasons on



CAPTAIN NATHAN B. WATSON



JOHN N. DREW, THE PILOT



the sloop *Nimbus* of Cohasset, cutter *Huron* of Boston and New York and several other yachts owned at Boston.

This picture of the captain shows him standing beside the wheel of the *Constellation*, the vessel lying at anchor in port.

#### STEAMER *Tiger*

Steamer *Tiger* of Kingston, 30 tons, built at Kingston, in 1898, by Edward A. Ransom; owned by Edward A. Ransom, A. J. Hill, C. A. Ransom and H. S. West.

#### REMARKS

This was the only steamer ever built on Jones River, and the largest vessel built on the Jones River since 1874. She was built in the boatyard of Captain E. A. Ransom, who was her designer and builder, and was launched from his yard on the south side of his workshop or boathouse in the spring of 1898. Captain Ransom, her master, used her a few years for off-shore lobstering and fishing, when she was sold to the Churches of Tiverton, R. I., and used for a porgy steamer. Her dimensions were as follows: 53 feet over all, 14 feet beam and 6 feet draft. Her picture shows her to have been a very handsome vessel.

#### CAPTAIN EDWARD A. RANSOM

The first years of his life were passed in Kingston and on the Gurnet, Plymouth Harbor, and like Captain Watson, his brother-in-law, he learned to sail a boat when very young. As he grew older he made voyages to the West Indies and South America in Duxbury vessels and for a time was in the Plymouth packet, *Sarah E. Hyde*, running between Plymouth and Boston. After giving up the sea he lived in Kingston winters, and on the Gurnet and Clark's Island in summer, for a number of years carrying on the lobster fishing business, and it was then that his attention was called to the improvements that might be made in the design of the boats used for lobstering in the bay, by giving them a centerboard and overhanging stern. After he commenced building these boats at Kingston in the old Drew workshop he made still further improvements in their construction, of which a description is given elsewhere in this book.

In 1883, he was captain of the sloop yacht, *Siren*, of Kingston and some years later was employed by George M. Winslow of Boston and Duxbury, to superintend the construction of his yacht, *Gevalia*, building at Essex, and going in her as master when completed. On retiring from yachting, he continued the business of building, hauling up and repairing launches and yachts until a few months before his death, in 1922, 77 years old.

An account of the steamer *Tiger* which he built in his yard on the southerly side of his boathouse, in 1898, together with her picture, is found among the list of Kingston vessels.

#### CAPTAIN JOHN N. DREW, THE PILOT

Captain Drew was born in Kingston, in 1821, and died here in 1906. His ancestor was Samuel Drew, the first of the Drew family to come here. As a boy and young man he went on the packets running between here and Boston, and bay fishing. For a number of summers he made his home at Cut River, or Green Harbor, fishing and lobstering, returning to Kingston in the fall and working in the shipyards as a carpenter in the winter. He was the pilot



CAPTAIN EDWARD A. RANSOM

for the bay and river for the later of Joseph Holmes' vessels and all of those owned by Edward Holmes. After the last vessel was sold he engaged in boat fishing and the carrying out of sailing parties from here until he was an old man, no longer able to handle his boat.

While Mr. James L. Hall owned the sloop yacht, *Playmate*, he went in her as captain and when she was sold to Plymouth and the Gurnet, remained in her for a season.

He lived in the house on the corner of Linden Street and the Landing Road now owned by Roland S. Bailey.

The picture of Captain Drew shows him standing in his sailboat, *Matchless*, waiting for a breeze and drifting down stream with the tide. It was taken from the upper Fish Wharf on Jones River, about 1890, by his friend, Mr. William L. Ames formerly of Kingston, and the Bradford House and Landing House with the old joiner's loft are seen in the distance.

In these days of steam and electricity when few remember the fleets of sailing vessels once seen in our seaports an endeavor has been made to interest the public in a revival of the merchant marine of the country by the publication, in various forms, of accounts of the most famous voyages of old Boston and Salem sailing ships. In many instances, their log-books, charts and sea-journals have been saved and it is easy to follow their different voyages to their completion. In Salem, records, pictures and models of them have been deposited in the Essex Institute as has likewise been done in the Massachusetts Historical Society of Boston and other societies interested in marine history.

For the same purpose many books are now offered for sale in England, giving the stories of the early and later days of sailing ships belonging to that country, and the accounts of their voyages are similar to those given of American ships. Beautiful illustrations, taken from the original paintings, are to be found in the publications of both countries.

Being obliged to depend almost entirely on the Holmes family for the accounts of the Kingston vessels, the Delano family records offering still less material, it has been impossible to enter into the details of voyages in comparison with those made by the more numerous vessels of the larger ports. Not a log-book is in existence. Several working models, paintings and old charts, a sea-journal of a few voyages, some old letters and account books, are all that remain today.

In this narrative I have endeavored to show the part taken by Kingston, in what at one time was the principal industry of New England. In years to come, when the river will no longer show any trace of the busy life once occupying its banks, it may be of interest to some to read this record of what was a source of wealth to those engaged in it and of great prosperity to the town.

I have derived my information from the Plymouth Custom House records, family letters, private journals, account books and what has been told to me by those who formerly took an active part in these affairs.

Looking across the bay, no sails are seen whitening the horizon. A small collection of pictures is all that is left to show that, for over one hundred and fifty years, Kingston was once a hailing port for ships that sailed the seven seas.

The sailing of the last one was so long ago, that to the few who remember her and were once familiar with the sea and the ships going down to it, the words of the old deep-water chantey, "It's time for us to leave her," seem most appropriate. And, as the last line of the day's doings in a ship's log book often read, "So ends this day," "So ends" the maritime story of Kingston.





To Ed & June -

June 1959

Homer S. Tilton











